

RUDYARD KIPLING

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# LETTERS OF MARQUE

BY  
RUDYARD KIPLING

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# LETTERS OF MARQUE

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## I.

EXCEPT for those who, under compulsion of a sick certificate, are flying Bombaywards, it is good for every man to see some little of the great Indian Empire and the strange folk who move about it. It is good to escape for a time from the House of Rimmon—be it office or cutchery—and to go abroad under no more exacting master than personal inclination, and with no more definite plan of travel than has the horse, escaped from pasture, free upon the countryside. The first result of such freedom is extreme bewilderment, and the second reduces the freed to a state of mind which, for his sins, must be the normal portion of the Globe-trotter—the man who “does” kingdoms in days and writes books upon them in weeks. And this desperate facility is not as strange as it seems. By the time that an Englishman has come by sea and rail *via* America, Japan, Singapur, and Ceylon, to India, he can—these eyes have seen him do so—master in five minutes the intricacies

of the *Indian Bradshaw*, and tell an old resident exactly how and where the trains run. Can we wonder that the intoxication of success in hasty assimilation should make him overbold, and that he should try to grasp—but a full account of the insolent Globe-trotter must be reserved. He is worthy of a book. Given absolute freedom for a month, the mind, as I have said, fails to take in the situation and, after much debate, contents itself with following in old and well-beaten ways—paths that we in India have no time to tread, but must leave to the country cousin who wears his *pagri* tail-fashion down his back, and says “cabman” to the driver of the *ticca-ghari*.

Now, Jeypore from the Anglo-Indian point of view is a station on the Rajputana-Malwa line, on the way to Bombay, where half an hour is allowed for dinner, and where there ought to be more protection from the sun than at present exists. Some few, more learned than the rest, know that garnets come from Jeypore, and here the limits of our wisdom are set. We do not, to quote the Calcutta shopkeeper, come out “for the good of our 'ealth,” and what touring we accomplish is for the most part off the line of rail.

For these reasons, and because he wished to study our winter birds of passage, one of the few thousand Englishmen in India on a date and in a place which have no concern with the story, sacrificed all his self-respect and became—at enormous personal inconve-



nience—a Globe-trotter going to Jeypore, and leaving behind him for a little while all that old and well-known life in which Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners, Governors and Lieutenant-Governors, Aides-de-camp, Colonels and their wives, Majors, Captains, and Subalterns after their kind move and rule and govern and squabble and fight and sell each other's horses and tell wicked stories of their neighbors. But before he had fully settled into his part or accustomed himself to saying, "Please take out this luggage," to the coolies at the stations, he saw from the train the Taj wrapped in the mists of the morning.

There is a story of a Frenchman who feared not God, nor regarded man, sailing to Egypt for the express purpose of scoffing at the Pyramids and—though this is hard to believe—at the great Napoleon who had warred under their shadow. It is on record that that blasphemous Gaul came to the Great Pyramid and wept through mingled reverence and contrition; for he sprang from an emotional race. To understand his feelings it is necessary to have read a great deal too much about the Taj, its design and proportions, to have seen execrable pictures of it at the Simla Fine Arts Exhibition, to have had its praises sung by superior and traveled friends till the brain loathed the repetition of the word, and then, sulky with want of sleep, heavy-eyed, unwashed, and chilled, to come

upon it suddenly. Under these circumstances everything, you will concede, is in favor of a cold, critical, and not too impartial verdict. As the Englishman leaned out of the carriage he saw first an opal-tinted cloud on the horizon, and, later, certain towers. The mists lay on the ground, so that the splendor seemed to be floating free of the earth ; and the mists rose in the background, so that at no time could everything be seen clearly. Then as the train sped forward, and the mists shifted, and the sun shone upon the mists, the Taj took a hundred new shapes, each perfect and each beyond description. It was the Ivory Gate through which all good dreams come ; it was the realization of the gleaming halls of dawn that Tennyson sings of ; it was veritably the " aspiration fixed," the " sign made stone," of a lesser poet ; and over and above concrete comparisons, it seemed the embodiment of all things pure, all things holy, and all things unhappy. That was the mystery of the building. It may be that the mists wrought the witchery, and that the Taj seen in the dry sunlight is only, as guide-books say, a noble structure. The Englishman could not tell, and has made a vow that he will never go nearer the spot, for fear of breaking the charm of the unearthly pavilions.

It may be, too, that each must view the Taj for himself with his own eyes, working out his own interpretation of the sight. It is certain that no man can in cold blood and

colder ink set down his impressions if he has been in the least moved.

To the one who watched and wondered that November morning the thing seemed full of sorrow—the sorrow of the man who built it for the woman he loved, and the sorrow of the workmen who died in the building—used up like cattle. And in the face of this sorrow the Taj flushed in the sunlight and was beautiful, after the beauty of a woman who has done no wrong.

Here the train ran in under the walls of Agra Fort, and another train—of thought incoherent as that written above—came to an end. Let those who scoff at overmuch enthusiasm look at the Taj and thenceforward be dumb. It is well on the threshold of a journey to be taught reverence and awe.

But there is no reverence in the Globe-trotter: he is brazen. A Young Man from Manchester was traveling to Bombay in order—how the words hurt!—to be home by Christmas. He had come through America, New Zealand, and Australia, and finding that he had ten days to spare at Bombay, conceived the modest idea of “doing India.” “I don’t say that I’ve done it all; but you may say that I’ve seen a good deal.” Then he explained that he had been “much pleased” at Agra, “much pleased” at Delhi, and, last profanation, “very much pleased” at the Taj. Indeed, he seemed to be going through life just then “much pleased” at everything.

With rare and sparkling originality he remarked that India was a "big place," and that there were many things to buy. Verily, this Young Man must have been a delight to the Delhi boxwallahs. He had purchased shawls and embroidery "to the tune of" a certain number of rupees duly set forth, and he had purchased jewelry to another tune. These were gifts for friends at home, and he considered them "very Eastern." If silver filigree work modeled on Palais Royal patterns, or aniline blue scarves be Eastern, he had succeeded in his heart's desire. For some inscrutable end it had been decreed that man shall take a delight in making his fellow-man miserable. The Englishman began to point out gravely the probable extent to which the Young Man from Manchester had been swindled, and the Young Man said: "By Jove. You don't say so. I hate being done. If there's anything I hate, it's being done!"

He had been so happy in the "thought of getting home by Christmas," and so charmingly communicative as to the members of his family for whom such and such gifts were intended, that the Englishman, cut short the record of fraud and soothed him by saying that he had not been so very badly "done," after all. This consideration was misplaced, for, his peace of mind restored, the Young Man from Manchester looked out of the window and, waving his hand over the Empire generally, said: "I say. Look here. All

those wells are wrong, you know !” The wells were on the wheel and inclined plane system ; but he objected to the incline, and said that it would be much better for the bullocks if they walked on level ground. Then light dawned upon him, and he said : “ I suppose it’s to exercise all their muscles. Y’ know a canal horse is no use after he has been on the tow-path for some time. He can’t walk anywhere but on the flat, y’ know, and I suppose it’s just the same with bullocks.” The spurs of the Aravalis, under which the train was running, had evidently suggested this brilliant idea which passed uncontradicted, for the Englishman was looking out of the window.

If one were bold enough to generalize after the manner of Globe-trotters, it would be easy to build up a theory on the well incident to account for the apparent insanity of some of our cold weather visitors. Even the Young Man from Manchester could evolve a complete idea for the training of well-bullocks in the East at thirty seconds’ notice. How much the more could a cultivated observer from, let us say, an English constituency, blunder and pervert and mangle ? We in this country have no time to work out the notion, which is worthy of the consideration of some leisurely Teuton intellect.

Envy may have prompted a too bitter judgment of the Young Man from Manchester ; for, as the train bore him from Jeypore to Ahmedabad, happy in “ his getting home by

Christmas," pleased as a child with his Delhi atrocities, pink-cheeked, whiskered and superbly self-confident, the Englishman whose home for the time was a dark bungaloathsome hotel, watched his departure regretfully ; for he knew exactly to what sort of genial, cheery British household, rich in untraveled kin, that Young Man was speeding. It is pleasant to play at Globe-trotting ; but to enter fully into the spirit of the piece, one must also be "going home for Christmas."

## II.

IF any part of a land strewn with dead men's bones have a special claim to distinction, Rajputana, as the cock-pit of India, stands first. East of Suez men do not build towers on the tops of hills for the sake of the view, nor do they stripe the mountain sides with bastioned stone walls to keep in cattle. Since the beginning of time, if we are to credit the legends, there was fighting—heroic fighting—at the foot of the Aravalis and beyond, in the great deserts of sand penned by those kindly mountains from spreading over the heart of India. The "Thirty-six Royal Races" fought as royal races know how to do, Chohan with Rahtor, brother against brother, son against father. Later—but excerpts from the tangled tale of force, fraud, cunning, desperate love and more desperate revenge, crime worthy of demons and virtues fit for gods, may be found, by all who care to look, in the book of the man who loved the Rajputs and gave a life's labors in their behalf. From Delhi to Abu, and from the Indus to the Chambul, each yard of ground has witnessed slaughter, pillage, and rapine. But, to-day, the capital of the State, that Dhola Race, son of Soora Singh, hacked out more than nine hundred years ago with the sword from some weaker

ruler's realm, is lighted with gas, and possesses many striking and English peculiarities.

Dhola Rae was killed in due time, and for nine hundred years Jeypore, torn by the intrigues of unruly princes and princelings, fought Asiatically.

When and how Jeypore became a feudatory of British power and in what manner we put a slur upon Rajput honor—punctilious as the honor of the Pathan—are matters of which the Globe-trotter knows more than we do. He “reads up”—to quote his own words—a city before he comes to us, and, straightway going to another city, forgets, or, worse still, mixes what he has learnt—so that in the end he writes down the Rajput a Mahratta, says that Lahore is in the Northwest Provinces, and was once the capital of Sivaji, and piteously demands a “guide-book on all India, a thing that you can carry in your trunk, y’ know—that gives you plain descriptions of things without mixing you up.” Here is a chance for a writer of discrimination and void of conscience!

But to return to Jeypore—a pink city set on the border of a blue lake, and surrounded by the low, red spurs of the Aravalis—a city to see and to puzzle over. There was once a ruler of the State, called Jey Singh, who lived in the days of Aurungzeb, and did him service with foot and horse. He must have been the Solomon of Rajputana, for through the forty-four years of his reign his “wisdom remained



with him." He led armies, and when fighting was over, turned to literature ; he intrigued desperately and successfully, but found time to gain a deep insight into astronomy, and, by what remains above ground now, we can tell that whatsoever his eyes desired, he kept not from him. Knowing his own worth, he deserted the city of Amber founded by Dhola Rae among the hills, and, six miles further, in the open plain, bade one Vedyadhar, his architect, build a new city, as seldom Indian city was built before—with huge streets straight as an arrow, sixty yards broad, and cross-streets broad and straight. Many years afterward the good people of America builded their towns after this pattern, but knowing nothing of Jey Singh, they took all the credit to themselves.

He built himself everything that pleased him, palaces and gardens and temples, and then died, and was buried under a white marble tomb on a hill overlooking the city. He was a traitor, if history speaks truth, to his own kin, and he was an accomplished murderer, but he did his best to check infanticide ; he reformed the Mahometan calendar ; he piled up a superb library and he made Jeypore a marvel.

Later on came a successor, educated and enlightened by all the lamps of British Progress, and converted the city of Jey Singh into a surprise—a big, bewildering, practical joke. He laid down sumptuous *trottoirs* of hewn stone, and central carriage drives, also of

hewn stone, in the main street; he, that is to say, Colonel Jacob, the Superintending Engineer of the State, devised a water supply for the city and studded the ways with standpipes. He built gas works, set afoot a School of Art, a Museum—all the things in fact which are necessary to Western municipal welfare and comfort, and saw that they were the best of their kind. How much Colonel Jacob has done, not only for the good of Jeypore city but for the good of the State at large, will never be known, because the officer in question is one of the not small class who resolutely refuse to talk about their own work. The result of the good work is that the old and the new, the rampantly raw and the sullenly old, stand cheek-by-jowl in startling contrast. Thus, the branded bull trips over the rails of a steel tramway which brings out the city rubbish; the lacquered and painted cart behind the two little stag-like trotting bullocks catches its primitive wheels in the cast-iron gas-lamp post with the brass nozzle a-top, and all Rajputana, gaily clad, small-turbaned swaggering Rajputana, circulates along the magnificent pavements.

The fortress-crowned hills look down upon the strange medley. One of them bears on its flank in huge white letters the cheery inscription, "Welcome!" This was made when the Prince of Wales visited Jeypore to shoot his first tiger; but the average traveler of to-day may appropriate the message to himself,

for Jeypore takes great care of strangers and shows them all courtesy. This, by the way, demoralizes the Globe-trotter, whose first cry is, "Where can we get horses? Where can we get elephants? Who is the man to write to for all these things?"

Thanks to the courtesy of the Maharaja, it is possible to see everything, but for the incurious who object to being driven through their sights, a journey down any one of the great main streets is a day's delightful occupation. The view is as unobstructed as that of the Champs Elysées; but in place of the white-stone fronts of Paris, rises a long line of open-work screen-wall, the prevailing tone of which is pink, caramel-pink, but house-owners have unlimited license to decorate their tenements as they please. Jeypore, broadly considered, is Hindu, and her architecture of the riotous, many-arched type which even the Globe-trotter after a short time learns to call Hindu. It is neither temperate nor noble, but it satisfies the general desire for something that "really looks Indian." A perverse taste for low company drew the Englishman from the pavement—to walk upon a real stone pavement is in itself a privilege—up a side-street, where he assisted at a quail fight and found the low-caste Rajput a cheery and affable soul. The owner of the losing quail was a trooper in the Maharaja's army. He explained that his pay was six rupees a month paid bi-monthly. He was cut the cost of his khaki blouse, brown-

leather accoutrements, and jack-boots ; lance, saddle, sword, and horse were given free. He refused to say for how many months in the year he was drilled, and said vaguely that his duties were mainly escort ones, and he had no fault to find with them. The defeat of his quail had vexed him, and he desired the Sahib to understand that the sowars of His Highness's army could ride. A clumsy attempt at a compliment so fired his martial blood that he climbed into his saddle, and then and there insisted on showing off his horsemanship. The road was narrow, the lance was long, and the horse was a big one, but no one objected, and the Englishman sat him down on a doorstep and watched the fun. The horse seemed in some shadowy way familiar. His head was not the lean head of the Kathiawar, nor his crest the crest of the Marwarri, and his fore-legs did not belong to these stony districts. "Where did he come from?" The sowar pointed northward and said, "from Amritsar," but he pronounced it "Armtzar." Many horses had been bought at the spring fairs in the Punjab ; they cost about two hundred rupees each, perhaps more, the sowar could not say. Some came from Hissar and some from other places beyond Delhi. They were very good horses. "That horse there," he pointed to one a little distance down the street, "is the son of a big Government horse—the kind that the Sirkar make for breeding horses—so high !" The owner of "that horse"

swaggered up, jaw bandaged and cat-moustached, and bade the Englishman look at his mount; bought, of course, when a colt. Both men together said that the Sahib had better examine the Maharaja Sahib's stable, where there were hundreds of horses, huge as elephants or tiny as sheep.

To the stables the Englishman accordingly went, knowing beforehand what he would find, and wondering whether the Sirkar's "big horses" were meant to get mounts for Rajput sowars. The Maharaja's stables are royal in size and appointments. The enclosure round which they stand must be about half a mile long—it allows ample space for exercising, besides paddocks for the colts. The horses, about two hundred and fifty, are bedded in pure white sand—bad for the coat if they roll, but good for the feet—the pickets are of white marble, the heel-ropes in every case of good sound rope, and in every case the stables are exquisitely clean. Each stall contains above the manger, a curious little bunk for the syce who, if he uses the accommodation, must assuredly die once each hot weather.

A journey round the stables is saddening, for the attendants are very anxious to strip their charges, and the stripping shows so much. A few men in India are credited with the faculty of never forgetting a horse they have once seen, and of knowing the produce of every stallion they have met. The Englishman would have given something for their

company at that hour. His knowledge of horseflesh was very limited; but he felt certain that more than one or two of the sleek, perfectly groomed country-breds should have been justifying their existence in the ranks of the British cavalry, instead of eating their heads off on six seers of gram and one of sugar per diem. But they had all been honestly bought and honestly paid for: and there was nothing in the wide world to prevent His Highness, if he wished to do so, from sweeping up the pick and pride of all the stud-bred horses in the Punjab. The attendants appeared to take a wicked delight in saying "eshtudbred" very loudly and with unnecessary emphasis as they threw back the loin-cloth. Sometimes they were wrong, but in too many cases they were right.

The Englishman left the stables and the great central maidan, where a nervous Biluchi was being taught, by a perfect network of ropes, to "monkey-jump," and went out into the streets reflecting on the working of horse breeding operations under the Government of India, and the advantages of having unlimited money wherewith to profit by other people's mistakes.

Then, as happened to the great Tartarin of Tarescon, wild beasts began to roar, and a crowd of little boys laughed. The lions of Jeypore are tigers, caged in a public place for the sport of the people, who hiss at them and disturb their royal feelings. Two or three of

the six great brutes are magnificent. All of them are short-tempered, and the bars of their captivity not too strong. A pariah-dog was furtively trying to scratch out a fragment of meat from between the bars of one of the cages, and the occupant tolerated him. Growing bolder, the starveling growled; the tiger struck at him with his paw, and the dog fled howling with fear. When he returned, he brought two friends with him, and the three mocked the captive from a distance.

It was not a pleasant sight and suggested Globe-trotters—gentlemen who imagine that “more curricles” should come at their bidding, and on being undeceived become abusive.

## III.

AND what shall be said of Amber, Queen of the Pass—the city that Jey Singh bade his people slough as snakes cast their skins? The Globe-trotter will assure you that it must be “done” before anything else, and the Globe-trotter is, for once, perfectly correct. Amber lies between six and seven miles from Jeypore among the tumbled fragments of the hills, and is reachable by so prosaic a conveyance as a *ticca-ghari*, and so uncomfortable a one as an elephant. *He* is provided by the Maharaja, and the people who make India their prey, are apt to accept his services as a matter of course.

Rise very early in the morning, before the stars have gone out, and drive through the sleeping city till the pavement gives place to cactus and sand, and educational and enlightened institutions to mile upon mile of semi-decayed Hindu temples—brown and weather-beaten—running down to the shores of the great Man Sagar Lake, wherein are more ruined temples, palaces, and fragments of causeways. The water-birds have their home in the half-submerged arcades and the crocodile nuzzles the shafts of the pillars. It is a fitting prelude to the desolation of Amber. Beyond the Man Sagar the road of



to-day climbs up-hill, and by its side runs the huge stone causeway of yesterday—blocks sunk in concrete. Down this path the swords of Amber went out to kill. A triple wall rings the city, and, at the third gate, the road drops into the valley of Amber. In the half light of dawn, a great city sunk between hills and built round three sides of a lake is dimly visible, and one waits to catch the hum that should arise from it as the day breaks. The air in the valley is bitterly chill. With the growing light, Amber stands revealed, and the traveler sees that it is a city that will never wake. A few *meenas* live in huts at the end of the valley, but the temples, the shrines, the palaces, and the tiers-on-tiers of houses are desolate. Trees grow in and split upon the walls, the windows are filled with brushwood, and the cactus chokes the street. The Englishman made his way up the side of the hill to the great palace that overlooks everything except the red fort of Jeighur, guardian of Amber. As the elephant swung up the steep roads paved with stone and built out on the sides of the hill, the Englishman looked into empty houses where the little gray squirrel sat and scratched its ears. The peacock walked on the house-tops, and the blue pigeon roosted within. He passed under iron-studded gates whose hinges were eaten out with rust, and by walls plumed and crowned with grass, and under more gateways, till, at last, he reached the palace and came suddenly into a great

quadrangle where two blinded, arrogant stallions, covered with red and gold trappings, screamed and neighed at each other from opposite ends of the vast space. For a little time these were the only visible living beings, and they were in perfect accord with the spirit of the spot. Afterwards certain workmen appeared, for it seems that the Maharaja keeps the old palace of his forefathers in good repair, but they were modern and mercenary, and with great difficulty were detached from the skirts of the traveler. A somewhat extensive experience of palace-seeing had taught him that it is best to see palaces alone, for the Oriental as a guide is indiscriminating and sets too great a store on corrugated iron roofs and glazed drain-pipes.

So the Englishman went into this palace built of stone, bedded on stone, springing out of scarped rock, and reached by stone ways—nothing but stone. Presently, he stumbled across a little temple of Kali, a gem of marble tracery and inlay, very dark and, at that hour of the morning, very cold.

If, as Viollet-le-Duc tells us to believe, a building reflects the character of its inhabitants, it must be impossible for one reared in an Eastern palace to think straightly or speak freely or—but here the annals of Rajputana contradict the theory—to act openly. The cramped and darkened rooms, the narrow smooth-walled passages with recesses where a man might wait for his enemy unseen, the

maze of ascending and descending stairs leading nowhither, the ever-present screens of marble tracery that may hide or reveal so much,—all these things breathe of plot and counter-plot, league and intrigue. In a living palace where the sightseer knows and feels that there are human beings everywhere, and that he is followed by scores of unseen eyes, the impression is almost unendurable. In a dead palace—a cemetery of loves and hatreds done with hundreds of years ago, and of plottings that had for their end, though the graybeards who plotted knew it not, the coming of the British tourist with guide-book and sun-hat—oppression gives place to simply impertinent curiosity. The Englishman wandered into all parts of the palace, for there was no one to stop him—not even the ghosts of the dead Queens—through ivory-studded doors, into the women's quarters, where a stream of water once flowed over a chiseled marble channel. A creeper had set its hands upon the lattice there, and there was the dust of old nests in one of the niches in the wall. Did the lady of light virtue who managed to become possessed of so great a portion of Jey Singh's library ever set her dainty feet in the trim garden of the Hall of Pleasure beyond the screen-work? Was it in the forty-pillared Hall of Audience that the order went forth that the Chief of Birjooghar was to be slain, and from what wall did the King look out when the horsemen clattered up the steep stone path to the palace, bearing

on their saddle-bows the heads of the bravest of Rajore? There were questions innumerable to be asked in each court and keep and cell; but the only answer was the cooing of the pigeons.

If a man desired beauty, there was enough and to spare in the palace; and of strength more than enough. With inlay and carved marble, with glass and color, the Kings who took their pleasure in that now desolate pile, made all that their eyes rested upon royal and superb. But any description of the artistic side of the palace, if it were not impossible, would be wearisome. The wise man will visit it when time and occasion serve, and will then, in some small measure, understand what must have been the riotous, sumptuous, murderous life to which our Governors and Lieutenant-Governors, Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners, Colonels and Captains and the Subalterns, have put an end.

From the top of the palace you may read if you please the Book of Ezekiel written in stone upon the hillside. Coming up, the Englishman had seen the city from below or on a level. He now looked into its very heart—the heart that had ceased to beat. There was no sound of men or cattle, or grindstones in those pitiful streets—nothing but the cooing of the pigeons. At first it seemed that the palace was not ruined at all—that soon the women would come up on the house-tops and the bells would ring in the temples. But as

he attempted to follow with his eye the turns of the streets, the Englishman saw that they died out in wood tangle and blocks of fallen stone, and that some of the houses were rent with great cracks, and pierced from roof to road with holes that let in the morning sun.. The drip-stones of the eaves were gap-toothed, and the tracery of the screens had fallen out so that zenana-rooms lay shamelessly open to the day. On the outskirts of the city, the strong-walled houses dwindled and sank down to mere stone-heaps and faint indications of plinth and wall, hard to trace against the background of stony soil. The shadow of the palace lay over two-thirds of the city and the trees deepened the shadow. "He who has bent him o'er the dead" *after* the hour of which Byron sings, knows that the features of the man become blunted as it were—the face begins to fade. The same hideous look lies on the face of the Queen of the Pass, and when once this is realized, the eye wonders that it could have ever believed in the life of her. She is the city "whose graves are set in the side of the pit, and her company is round about her graves," sister of Pathros, Zoan, and No.

Moved by a thoroughly insular instinct, the Englishman took up a piece of plaster and heaved it from the palace wall into the dark streets. It bounded from a house-top to a window-ledge, and thence into a little square, and the sound of its fall was hollow and echoing as the sound of a stone in a well. Then

the silence closed up upon the sound, till in the far-away courtyard below the roped stallions began screaming afresh. There may be desolation in the great Indian Desert to the westward, and there is desolation on the open seas; but the desolation of Amber is beyond the loneliness either of land or sea. Men by the hundred thousand must have toiled at the walls that bound it, the temples and bastions that stud the walls, the fort that overlooks all, the canals that once lifted water to the palace, and the garden in the lake of the valley. Renan could describe it as it stands to-day, and Vereschaguin could paint it.

Arrived at this satisfactory conclusion, the Englishman went down through the palace and the scores of venomous and suggestive little rooms, to the elephant in the courtyard, and was taken back in due time to the Nineteenth Century in the shape of His Highness, the Maharaja's Cotton-Press, returning a profit of twenty-seven per cent. and fitted with two engines, of fifty horse-power each, an hydraulic press, capable of exerting a pressure of three tons per square inch, and everything else to correspond. It stood under a neat corrugated iron roof close to the Jeypore Railway Station, and was in most perfect order, but somehow it did not taste well after Amber. There was aggressiveness about the engines and the smell of the raw cotton.

The modern side of Jeypore must not be mixed with the ancient.

## IV.

FROM the Cotton-Press the Englishman wandered through the wide streets till he came into a Hindu temple—rich in marble stone and inlay, and a deep and tranquil silence, close to the Public Library of the State. The brazen bull was hung with flowers, and men were burning the evening incense before Mahadeo ; while those who had prayed their prayer beat upon the bells hanging from the roof and passed out, secure in the knowledge that the god had heard them. If there be much religion, there is little reverence, as Westerns understand the term, at the services of the gods of the East. A tiny little maiden, child of a monstrously ugly, wall-eyed priest, staggered across the marble pavement to the shrine and threw, with a gust of childish laughter, the blossoms she was carrying into the lap of the great Mahadeo himself. Then she made as though she would leap up to the bell and ran away, still laughing, into the shadow of the cells behind the shrine, while her father explained that she was but a baby and that Mahadeo would take no notice. The temple, he said, was specially favored by the Maharaja, and drew from lands an income of twenty thousand rupees a year. Thakoors and great men also gave gifts out of their benevolence ;



and there was nothing in the wide world to prevent an Englishman from following their example.

By this time—for Amber and the Cotton-Press had filled the hours—night was falling, and the priests unhooked the swinging jets and began to light up the impassive face of Mahadeo with gas! They used Swedish matches.

Full night brought the hotel and its curiously composed human menagerie.

There is, if a work-a-day world will believe, a society entirely outside, and unconnected with, that of the Station—a planet within a planet, where nobody knows anything about the Collector's wife, the Colonel's dinner-party, or what was really the matter with the Engineer. It is a curious, an insatiably curious, thing, and its literature is Newman's *Bradshaw*. Wandering "old arm-sellers" and others live upon, it and so do the garnet-men and the makers of ancient Rajput shields. The world of the innocents abroad is a touching and unsophisticated place, and its very atmosphere urges the Anglo-Indian unconsciously to an extravagant mendacity. Can you wonder, then, that a guide of long-standing should in time grow to be an accomplished liar?

Into this world sometimes breaks the Anglo-Indian returned from leave, or a fugitive to the sea, and his presence is like that of a well-known landmark in the desert. The old arms-seller knows and avoids him, and he is detested



by the jobber of gharis who calls every one "my lord" in English, and panders to the "glaring race anomaly" by saying that every carriage not under his control is "rotten, my lord, having been used by natives." One of the privileges of playing at tourist is the brevet-rank of "Lord." *Hazur* is not to be compared with it.

There are many, and some very curious, methods of seeing India. One of these is buying English translations of the more Zolaistic of Zola's novels and reading them from breakfast to dinner-time in the veranda. Yet another, even simpler, is American in its conception. Take a Newman's *Bradshaw* and a blue pencil, and race up and down the length of the Empire, ticking off the names of the stations "done." To do this thoroughly, keep strictly to the railway buildings and form your conclusions through the carriage-windows. These eyes have seen both ways of working in full blast; and, on the whole, the first is the most commendable.

Let us consider now with due reverence the modern side of Jeypore. It is difficult to write of a nickel-plated civilization set down under the immemorial Aravalis in the first state of Rajputana. The red-gray hills seem to laugh at it, and the ever-shifting sand-dunes under the hills take no account of it, for they advance upon the bases of the monogrammed, coronet-crowned lamp-posts, and fill up the points of the natty tramways near

the Waterworks, which are the outposts of the civilization of Jeypore.

Escape from the city by the Railway Station till you meet the cactus and the mud-bank and the Maharaja's Cotton-Press. Pass between a tramway and a trough for wayfaring camels till your foot sinks ankle-deep in soft sand, and you come upon what seems to be the fringe of illimitable desert—mound upon mound of tussocks overgrown with plumed grass where the parrots sit and swing. Here, if you have kept to the road, you shall find a dam faced with stone, a great tank, and pumping machinery fine as the heart of a municipal engineer can desire—pure water, sound pipes, and well-kept engines. If you belong to what is sarcastically styled an "able and intelligent municipality" under the British Rule, go down to the level of the tank, scoop up the water in your hands and drink, thinking meanwhile of the defects of the town whence you came. The experience will be a profitable one. There are statistics in connection with the Waterworks figures relating to "three-throw-plungers," delivery and supply, which should be known to the professional reader. They would not interest the unprofessional who would learn his lesson among the thronged standpipes of the city.

While the Englishman was preparing in his mind a scathing rebuke for an erring municipality that he knew of, a camel swung across the sands, its driver's jaw and brow bound

mummy-fashion to guard against the dust. The man was evidently a stranger to the place, for he pulled up and asked the Englishman where the drinking-troughs were. He was a gentleman and bore very patiently with the Englishman's absurd ignorance of his dialect. He had come from some village, with an unpronounceable name, thirty *kos* away to see his brother's son, who was sick in the big Hospital. While the camel was drinking the man talked, lying back along his mount. He knew nothing of Jeypore, except the names of certain Englishmen in it, the men who, he said, had made the Waterworks and built the Hospital for his brother's son's comfort.

And this is the curious feature of Jeypore ; though happily the city is not unique in its peculiarity. When the late Maharaja ascended the throne, more than fifty years ago, it was his royal will and pleasure that Jeypore should advance. Whether he was prompted by love for his subjects, desire for praise, or the magnificent vanity with which Jey Singh must have been so largely dowered, are questions that concern nobody. In the latter years of his reign, he was supplied with Englishmen who made the State their fatherland, and identified themselves with its progress as only Englishman can. Behind them stood the Maharaja ready to spend money with a lavishness that no Supreme Government would dream of ; and it would not be

too much to say that the two made the State what it is. When Ram Singh died, Madho Singh, his successor, a conservative Hindu, forbore to interfere in any way with the work that was going forward. It is said in the city that he does not overburden himself with the cares of State, the driving power being mainly in the hands of a Bengali, who has everything but the name of Minister. Nor do the Englishmen, it is said in the city, mix themselves with the business of government ; their business being wholly executive.

They can, according to the voice of the city, do what they please, and the voice of the city—not in the main roads, but in the little side-alleys where the stall-less bull blocks the path—attests how well their pleasure has suited the pleasure of the people. In truth, to men of action few things could be more delightful than having a State of fifteen thousand square miles placed at their disposal, as it were, to leave their mark on. Unfortunately for the vagrant traveler, those who work hard for practical ends prefer not to talk about their doings, and he must, therefore, pick up what information he can at second-hand or in the city. The men at the standpipes explain that the Maharaja Sahib's father gave the order for the Waterworks and that Yakub (Jacob) Sahib made them—not only in the city, but out away in the district. "Did the people grow more crops thereby?" "Of course they did. Were canals made only to wash

in?" "How much more crops?" "Who knows? The Sahib had better go and ask some official." Increased irrigation means increase of revenue for the State somewhere, but the man who brought about the increase does not say so.

After a few days of amateur Globe-trotting, a shamelessness great as that of the other loafer—the red-nosed man who hangs about compounds and is always on the eve of starting for Calcutta—possesses the masquerader; so that he feels equal to asking a Resident for a parcel-gilt howdah, or dropping into dinner with a Lieutenant-Governor. No man has a right to keep anything back from a Globe-trotter, who is a mild, temperate, gentlemanly, and unobtrusive seeker after truth. Therefore he who, without a word of enlightenment sends the visitor into a city which he himself has beautified and adorned and made clean and wholesome, deserves unsparing exposure. And the city may be trusted to betray him. The *malli* in the Ram Newas Gardens—Gardens which are finer than any in India and fit to rank with the best in Paris—says that the Maharaja gave the order and Yakub Sahib made the Gardens. He also says that the Hospital just outside the Gardens was built by Yakub Sahib, and if the Sahib will go to the center of the Gardens, he will find another big building, a Museum by the same hand.

But the Englishman went first to the Hos-

pital, and found the out-patients beginning to arrive. A Hospital cannot tell lies about its own progress as a municipality can. Sick folk either come or lie in their own villages. In the case of the Mayo Hospital, they came, and the operation book showed that they had been in the habit of coming. Doctors at issue with provincial and local administrations, Civil Surgeons who cannot get their indents complied with, ground-down and mutinous practitioners all India over, would do well to visit the Mayo Hospital, Jeypore. They might, in the exceeding bitterness of their envy, be able to point out some defects in its supplies, or its beds, or its splints, or in the absolute insolation of the women's quarters from the men's.

From the Hospital the Englishman went to the Museum in the center of the Gardens, and was eaten up by it, for Museums appealed to him. The casing of the jewel was in the first place superb—a wonder of carven white stone of the Indo-Saracenic style. It stood on a stone plinth, and was rich in stone-tracery, green marble columns from Ajmir, red marble, white marble colonnades, courts with fountains, richly carved wooden doors, frescoes, inlay, and color. The ornamentation of the tombs of Delhi, the palaces of Agra, and the walls of Amber have been laid under contribution to supply the designs in bracket, arch, and soffit; and stone-masons from the Jeypore School of Art have woven into the work the best that their hands could produce. The

building in essence if not in the fact of to-day, is the work of Freemasons. The men were allowed a certain scope in their choice of detail and the result . . . but it should be seen to be understood, as it stands in those Imperial Gardens. And, observe, the man who had designed it, who had superintended its erection, had said no word to indicate that there were such a thing in the place, or that every foot of it, from the domes of the roof to the cool green chunam dadoes and the carving of the rims of the fountains in the courtyard, was worth studying! Round the arches of the great center court are written in Sanskrit and Hindi, texts from the great Hindu writers of old, bearing on the beauty of wisdom and the sanctity of true knowledge.

In the central corridor are six great frescoes, each about nine feet by five, copies of illustrations in the Royal Folio of the *Razmnameh*, the *Mahabharata*, which Abkar caused to be done by the best artists of his day. The original is in the Museum, and he who can steal it will find a purchaser at any price up to fifty thousand pounds.

## V.

INTERNALLY, there is, in all honesty, no limit to the luxury of the Jeypore Museum. It revels in "South Kensington" cases—of the approved pattern—that turn the beholder homesick, and South Kensington labels, whereon the description, measurements, and price of each object are fairly printed. These make savage one who knows how labelling is bungled in some of the Government Museums—our starved barns that are supposed to hold the economic exhibits, not of little States, but of great Provinces.

The floors are of dark red chunam, overlaid with a discreet and silent matting ; the doors, where they are not plate glass, are of carved wood, no two alike, hinged by sumptuous brass hinges on to marble jambs and opening without noise. On the carved marble pillars of each hall are fixed revolving cases of the S. K. M. pattern to show textile fabrics, gold lace, and the like. In the recesses of the walls are more cases, and on the railing of the gallery that runs round each of the three great central rooms, are fixed low cases to hold natural history specimens and models of fruits and vegetables.

Hear this, Governments of India from the Punjab to Madras ! The doors come true to



the jamb, and cases, which have been through a hot weather, are neither warped nor cracked, nor are there unseemly tallow-drops and flaws in the glasses. The maroon cloth, on or against which the exhibits are placed, is of close texture, untouched by the moth, neither stained nor meager nor sunfaded; the revolving cases revolve freely without rattling; there is not a speck of dust from one end of the building to the other, because the menial staff are numerous enough to keep everything clean, and the Curator's office is a veritable office—not a shed or a bath-room, or a loose-box partitioned from the main building. These things are so because money has been spent on the Museum, and it is now a rebuke to all other Museums in India from Calcutta downwards. Whether it is not too good to be buried away in a native State is a question which envious men may raise and answer as they choose. Not long ago, the editor of a Bombay paper passed through it, but having the interests of the Egocentric Presidency before his eyes, dwelt more upon the idea of the building than its structural beauties; saying that Bombay, who professed a weakness for technical education, should be ashamed of herself. And he was quite right.

The system of the Museum is complete in intention, as are its appointments in design. At present there are some fifteen thousand objects of art, covering a complete exposition of the arts, from enamels to pottery and from

brass-ware to stone-carving, of the State of Jeypore. They are compared with similar arts of other lands. Thus a Damio's sword—a gem of lacquer-plated silk and stud-work—flanks the *tulwars* of Marwar and the *jezails* of Tonk; and reproductions of Persian and Russian brass-work stand side by side with the handicrafts of the pupils of the Jeypore School of Art. A photograph of His Highness the present Maharaja is set among the arms, which are the most prominent features of the first or metal-room. As the villagers enter, they salaam reverently to the photo, and then move on slowly, with an evidently intelligent interest in what they see. Ruskin could describe the scene admirably—pointing out how reverence must precede the study of art, and how it is good for Englishmen and Rajputs alike to bow on occasion before Geisler's cap. They thumb the revolving cases of cloths do those rustics, and artlessly try to feel the texture through the protecting glass. The main object of the Museum is avowedly provincial—to show the craftsman of Jeypore the best that his predecessors could do, and what foreign artists have done. In time—but the Curator of the Museum has many schemes which will assuredly bear fruit in time, and it would be unfair to divulge them. Let those who doubt the thoroughness of a Museum under one man's control, built, filled and endowed with royal generosity—an institution perfectly independent of the Gov-

ernment of India—go and exhaustively visit Dr. Hendley's charge at Jeypore. Like the man who made the building, he refuses to talk, and so the greater part of the work that he has in hand must be guessed at.

At one point, indeed, the Curator was taken off his guard. A huge map of the kingdom showed in green the portions that had been brought under irrigation, while blue circles marked the towns that owned dispensaries. "I want to bring every man in the State within twenty miles of a dispensary—and I've nearly done it," said he. Then he checked himself, and went off to food-grains in little bottles as being neutral and colorless things. Envy is forced to admit that the arrangement of the Museum—far too important a matter to be explained off-hand—is Continental in its character, and has a definite end and bearing—a trifle omitted by many institutions other than Museums. But—in fine, what can one say of a collection whose very labels are gilt-edged! Shameful extravagance? Nothing of the kind—only finish, perfectly in keeping with the rest of the fittings—a finish that we in *kutch*a India have failed to catch.

From the Museum go out through the city to the Maharaja's Palace—skilfully avoiding the man who would show you the Maharaja's European billiard-room,—and wander through a wilderness of sunlit, sleepy courts, gay with paint and frescoes, till you reach an inner

square, where smiling gray-bearded men squat at ease and play *chaupur*—just such a game as cost the Pandavs the fair Draupadi—with inlaid dice and gaily lacquered pieces. These ancients are very polite and will press you to play, but give no heed to them, for *chaupur* is an expensive game—expensive as quail-fighting, when you have backed the wrong bird and the people are laughing at your inexperience. The Maharaja's Palace is gay, overwhelmingly rich in candelabra, painted ceilings, gilt mirrors, and other evidences of a too hastily assimilated civilization; but, if the evidence of the ear can be trusted, the old, old game of intrigue goes on as merrily as of yore. A figure in saffron came out of a dark arch into the sunlight, almost falling into the arms of one in pink. "Where have you come from?" "I have been to see——" the name was unintelligible. "That is a lie; you have *not!*" Then, across the court, some one laughed a low, croaking laugh. The pink and saffron figures separated as though they had been shot, and disappeared into separate bolt-holes. It was a curious little incident, and might have meant a great deal or just nothing at all. It distracted the attention of the ancients bowed above the *chaupur* cloth.

In the Palace-gardens there is even a greater stillness than that about the courts, and here nothing of the West, unless a critical soul might take exception to the lamp-posts. At

the extreme end lies a lake-like tank swarming with *muggers*. It is reached through an opening under a block of zenana buildings. Remembering that all beasts by the palaces of Kings or the temples of priests in this country would answer to the name of "Brother," the Englishman cried with the voice of faith across the water. And the mysterious freemasonry did not fail. At the far end of the tank rose a ripple that grew and grew and grew like a thing in a nightmare, and became presently an aged *mugger*. As he neared the shore, there emerged, the green slime thick upon his eyelids, another beast, and the two together snapped at a cigar-butt—the only reward for their courtesy. Then, disgusted, they sank stern first with a gentle sigh. Now a *mugger's* sigh is the most suggestive sound in animal speech. It suggested first the zenana buildings overhead, the walled passes through the purple hills beyond, a horse that might clatter through the passes till he reached the Man Sagar Lake below the passes, and a boat that might row across the Man Sagar till it nosed the wall of the Palace-tank, and then—then uprose the *mugger* with the filth upon his forehead and winked one horny eyelid—in truth he did!—and so supplied a fitting end to a foolish fiction of old days and things that might have been. But it must be unpleasant to live in a house whose base is washed by such a tank.

And so back through the chunamed courts, and among the gentle sloping paths between the orange trees, up to an entrance of the palace, guarded by two rusty brown dogs from Kabul, each big as a man, and each requiring a man's charpoy to sleep upon. Very gay was the front of the palace, very brilliant were the glimpses of the damask-couched, gilded rooms within, and very, very civilized were the lamp-posts with Ram Singh's monogram, devised to look like V. R., at the bottom, and a coronet at the top. An unseen brass band among the orange bushes struck up the overture of the *Bronze Horse*. Those who know the music will see at once that that was the only tune which exacted and perfectly fitted the scene and its surroundings. It was a coincidence and a revelation.

In his time, and when he was not fighting, Jey Singh, the second, who built the city, was a great astronomer—a royal Omar Khayyam, for he, like the tent-maker of Nishapur, reformed a calendar, and strove to wring their mysteries from the stars with instruments worthy of a king. But in the end he wrote that the goodness of the Almighty was above everything, and died; leaving his observatory to decay without the palace-grounds.

From the *Bronze Horse* to the grass-grown enclosure that holds the Yantr Samrat, or Prince of Dials, is rather an abrupt passage. Jey Singh built him a dial with a gnomon some ninety feet high, to throw a shadow

against the sun, and the gnomon stands to-day, though there is grass in the kiosque at the top and the flight of steps up the hypotenuse is worn. He built also a zodiacal dial—twelve dials upon one platform—to find the moment of true noon at any time of the year, and hollowed out of the earth place for two hemispherical cups, cut by belts of stone, for comparative observations.

He made cups for calculating eclipses, and a mural quadrant and many other strange things of stone and mortar, of which people hardly know the names and but very little of the uses. Once, said a man in charge of two tiny elephants, *Indur* and *Har*, a Sahib came with the Viceroy, and spent eight days in the enclosure of the great neglected observatory, seeing and writing things in a book. But *he* understood *Sanskrit*—the Sanskrit upon the faces of the dials, and the meaning of the gnoma and pointers. Nowadays no one understands Sanskrit—not even the Pundits; but without doubt Jey Singh was a great man.

The hearer echoed the statement, though he knew nothing of astronomy, and of all the wonders in the observatory was only struck by the fact that the shadow of the Prince of Dials moved over its vast plate so quickly that it seemed as though Time, wroth at the insolence of Jey Singh, had loosed the Horses of the Sun and were sweeping everything—dainty Palace-gardens and ruinous instruments—into the darkness of eternal night.



So he went away chased by the shadow on the dial, and returned to the hotel, where he found men who said—this must be a catch-word of Globe-trotters—that they were “much pleased at” Amber. They further thought that “house-rent would be cheap in those parts,” and sniggered over the witticism. There is a class of tourists, and a strangely large one, who individually never get farther than the “much pleased” state under any circumstances. This same class of tourists, it has also been observed, are usually free with hackneyed puns, vapid phrases, and alleged or bygone jokes. Jey Singh, in spite of a few discreditable *laches*, was a temperate and tolerant man; but he would have hanged those Globe-trotters in their trunk straps as high as the Yantr Samrat.

Next morning, in the gray dawn, the Englishman rose up and shook the sand of Jeypore from his feet, and went with Master Coryatt and Sir Thomas Roe to “Adsmir,” wondering whether a year in Jeypore would be sufficient to exhaust its interest, and why he had not gone out to the tombs of the dead Kings and the passes of Gulta and the fort of Motee Dungri. But what he wondered at most—knowing how many men who have in any way been connected with the birth of an institution, do, to the end of their days, continue to drag forward and exhume their labors and the honors that did *not* come to them—was the work of the two men who, together for years



past, have been pushing Jeypore along the stone-dressed paths of civilization, peace, and comfort. “ Servants of the Raj ” they called themselves, and surely they have served the Raj past all praise. The people in the city and the camel-driver from the sand-hills told of their work. They themselves held their peace as to what they had done, and, when pressed, referred—crowning baseness—to reports. Printed ones !

## VI.

ARRIVED at Ajmir, the Englishman fell among tents pitched under the shadow of a huge banian tree, and in them was a Punjabi. Now there is no brotherhood like the brotherhood of the Pauper Province ; for it is even greater than the genial and unquestioning hospitality which, in spite of the loafer and the Globe-trotter, seems to exist throughout India. Ajmir being British territory, though the inhabitants are allowed to carry arms, is the headquarters of many of the banking firms who lend to the Native States. The complaint of the Setts to-day is that their trade is bad, because an unsympathetic Government induces Native States to make railways and become prosperous. "Look at Jodhpur !" said a gentleman whose possessions might be roughly estimated at anything between thirty and forty-five lakhs. "Time was when Jodhpur was always in debt—and not so long ago, either. Now, they've got a railroad and are carrying salt over it, and, as sure as I stand here, they have a *surplus* ! What can we do ?" Poor pauper ! However, he makes a little profit on the fluctuations in the coinage of the States round him, for every small king seems to have the privilege of striking his own image and inflicting the Great Exchange

Question on his subjects. It is a poor State that has not two seers and five different rupees.

From a criminal point of view, Ajmir is not a pleasant place. The Native States lie all around and about it, and portions of the district are ten miles off, Native State-locked on every side. Thus the criminal, who may be a burglarious Meena lusting for the money bags of the Setts, or a Peshawari down south on a cold weather tour, has his plan of campaign much simplified.

The Englishman made only a short stay in the town, hearing that there was to be a ceremony—*tamasha* covers a multitude of things—at the capital of His Highness the Maharana of Udaipur—a town some hundred and eighty miles south of Ajmir, not known to many people beyond Viceroys and their Staffs and the officials of the Rajputana Agency. So he took a Neemuch train in the very early morning and, with the Punjabi, went due south to Chitor, the point of departure for Udaipur. In time the Aravalis gave place to a dead, flat, stone-strewn plain, thick with dhak-jungle. Later the date-palm fraternized with the dhak, and low hills stood on either side of the line. To this succeeded a tract rich in pure white stone—the line was ballasted with it. Then came more low hills, each with a comb of splintered rock a-top, overlooking dhak-jungle and villages fenced with thorns—places that at once declared themselves tiger-

ish. Last, the huge bulk of Chitor showed itself on the horizon. The train crossed the Gumber River and halted almost in the shadow of the hills on which the old pride of Udaipur was set.

It is difficult to give an idea of the Chitor fortress; but the long line of brown wall springing out of bush-covered hill suggested at once those pictures, such as the *Graphic* publishes, of the *Inflexible* or the *Devastation*—gigantic men-of-war with a very low free-board plowing through green sea. The hill on which the fort stands is ship-shaped and some miles long, and, from a distance, every inch appears to be scarped and guarded. But there was no time to see Chitor. The business of the day was to get, if possible, to Udaipur from Chitor Station, which was composed of one platform, one telegraph-room, a bench, and several vicious dogs.

The State of Udaipur is as backward as Jeypore is advanced—if we judge it by the standard of civilization. It does not approve of the incursions of Englishmen, and, to do it justice, it thoroughly succeeds in conveying its silent sulkiness. Still, where there is one English Resident, one Doctor, one Engineer, one Settlement Officer, and one Missionary, there must be a mail at least once a day. There was a mail. The Englishman, men said, might go by it if he liked, or he might not. Then, with a great sinking of the heart, he began to realize that his caste was of no

value in the stony pastures of Mewar, among the swaggering gentlemen who were so lavishly adorned with arms. There was a mail, the ghost of a tonga, with tattered side-cloths and patched roof, inconceivably filthy within and without, and it was Her Majesty's. There was another tonga,—an *aram* tonga, a carriage of ease—but the Englishman was not to have it. It was reserved for a Rajput Thakur who was going to Udaipur with his “tail.” The Thakur, in claret-colored velvet with a blue turban, a revolver—Army pattern—a sword, and five or six friends, also with swords, came by and indorsed the statement. Now, the mail tonga had a wheel which was destined to become the Wheel of Fate, and to lead to many curious things. Two diseased yellow ponies were extracted from a dung-hill and yoked to the tonga; and after due deliberation Her Majesty's mail started, the Thakur following.

In twelve hours, or thereabouts, the seventy miles between Chitor and Udaipur would be accomplished. Behind the tonga cantered an armed sowar. He was the guard. The Thakur's tonga came up with a rush, ran deliberately across the bows of the Englishman, chipped a pony, and passed on. One lives and learns. The Thakur seems to object to following the foreigner.

At the halting-stages, once in every six miles, that is to say, the ponies were carefully undressed and all their accoutrements fitted more or less accurately on to the backs of any

ponies that might happen to be near; the released animals finding their way back to their stables alone and unguided. There were no grooms, and the harness hung on by special dispensation of Providence. Still the ride over a good road, driven through a pitilessly stony country, had its charms for a while. At sunset the low hills turned to opal and wine-red and the brown dust flew up pure gold; for the tonga was running straight into the sinking sun. Now and again would pass a traveler on a camel, or a gang of *Bunjarras* with their pack-bullocks and their women; and the sun touched the brasses of their swords and guns till the poor wretches seemed rich merchants come back from traveling with Sindbad.

On a rock on the right-hand side, thirty-four great vultures were gathered over the carcass of a steer. And this was an evil omen. They made unseemly noises as the tonga passed, and a raven came out of a bush on the right and answered them. To crown all, one of the hide and skin castes sat on the left-hand side of the road, cutting up some of the flesh that he had stolen from the vultures. Could a man desire three more inauspicious signs for a night's travel? Twilight came, and the hills were alive with strange noises, as the red moon, nearly at her full, rose over Chitor. To the low hills of the mad geological formation, the tumbled strata that seem to obey no law, succeeded level ground, the

pasture lands of Mewar, cut by the Beruch and Wyan, streams running over smooth water-worn rock, and, as the heavy embankments and ample waterways showed, very lively in the rainy season.

In this region occurred the last and most inauspicious omen of all. Something had gone wrong with a crupper, a piece of blue and white punkah-cord. The Englishman pointed it out, and the driver, descending, danced on that lonely road an unholy dance, singing the while: "*The dumchi! The dumchi! The dumchi!*" in a shrill voice. Then he returned and drove on, while the Englishman wondered into what land of lunatics he was heading. At an average speed of six miles an hour, it is possible to see a great deal of the country; and, under brilliant moonlight, Mewar was desolately beautiful. There was no night traffic on the road no one except the patient sowar, his shadow an inky blot on white, cantering twenty yards behind. Once the tonga strayed into a company of date trees that fringed the path, and once rattled through a little town, and once the ponies shied at what the driver said was a rock; but it jumped up in the moonlight and went away.

Then came a great blasted heath whereon nothing was more than six inches high—a wilderness covered with grass and low thorn; and here, as nearly as might be midway between Chitor and Udaipur, the Wheel of Fate, which had been for some time beating against

the side of the tonga, came off, and Her Majesty's mails, two bags including parcels, collapsed on the wayside : while the Englishman repented him that he had neglected the omens of the vultures and the raven, the low-caste man and the mad driver.

There was a consultation and an examination of the wheel, but the whole tonga was rotten, and the axle was smashed and the axle pins were bent and nearly red-hot. "It is nothing," said the driver, "the mail often does this. What is a wheel?" He took a big stone and began hammering proudly on the tire, to show that that at least was sound. A hasty court-martial revealed that there was absolutely not one single relief vehicle on the whole road between Chitor and Udaipur.

Now this wilderness was so utterly waste that not even the barking of a dog or the sound of a night-fowl could be heard. Luckily the Thakur had, some twenty miles back, stepped out to smoke by the roadside, and his tonga had been passed meanwhile. The sowar was sent back to find that tonga and bring it on. He cantered into the haze of the moonlight and disappeared. Then said the driver : "Had there been no tonga behind us, I should have put the mails on a horse, because the Sirkar's mail cannot stop." The Englishman sat down upon the parcels-bag, for he felt that there was trouble coming. The driver looked East and West and said : "I, too, will go and see if the tonga can be found for



the Sirkar's dak cannot stop. Meantime, oh, Sahib, do you take care of the mails—one bag and one bag of parcels." So he ran swiftly into the haze of the moonlight and was lost, and the Englishman was left alone in charge of Her Majesty's mails, two unhappy ponies, and a lop-sided tonga. He lit a fire, for the night was bitterly cold, and only mourned that he could not destroy the whole of the territories of His Highness, the Maharana of Udaipur. But he managed to raise a very fine blaze, before he reflected that all this trouble was his own fault for wandering into Native States undesirous of Englishmen.

The ponies coughed dolorously from time to time, but they could not lift the weight of a dead silence that seemed to be crushing the earth. After an interval measurable by centuries, sowar, driver and Thakur's tonga reappeared; the latter full to the brim and bubbling over with humanity and bedding. "We will now," said the driver, not deigning to notice the Englishman who had been on guard over the mails, "put the Sirkar's mail into this tonga and go forward." Amiable heathen! He was going—he said so—to leave the Englishman to wait in the Sahara, for certainly thirty hours and perhaps forty-eight. Tongas are scarce on the Udaipur road. There are a few occasions in life when it is justifiable to delay Her Majesty's mails. This was one of them. Seating himself upon the parcels-

bag, the Englishman cried in what was intended to be a very terrible voice, but the silence soaked it up and left only a thin trickle of sound, that any one who touched the bags would be hit with a stick, several times, over the head. The bags were the only link between him and the civilization he had so rashly foregone. And there was a pause.

The Thakur put his head out of the tonga and spoke shrilly in Mewari. The Englishman replied in English-Urdu. The Thakur withdrew his head, and from certain grunts that followed seemed to be wakening his retainers. Then two men fell sleepily out of the tonga and walked into the night. "Come in," said the Thakur, "you and your baggage. My pistol is in that corner; be careful." The Englishman, taking a mail-bag in one hand for safety's sake,—the wilderness inspires an Anglo-Indian Cockney with unreasoning fear,—climbed into the tonga, which was then loaded far beyond Plimsoll mark, and the procession resumed its journey. Every one in the vehicle—it seemed as full as the railway carriage that held Alice through the Looking-Glass—was *Sahib* and *Hazur*. Except the Englishman. He was simple *tum* (thou), and a revolver, Army pattern, was printing every diamond in the chequer-work of its handle, on his right hip. When men desired him to move, they prodded him with the handles of *tulwars* till they had coiled him into an uneasy lump. Then they slept upon

him, or cannoned against him as the tonga bumped. It was an *aram* tonga, a tonga for ease. That was the bitterest thought of all.

In due season the harness began to break once every five minutes, and the driver vowed that the wheels would give way also.

After eight hours in one position, it is excessively difficult to walk, still more difficult to climb up an unknown road into a dak-bungalow; but he who has sought sleep on an arsenal and under the bodies of burly Rajputs can do it. The gray dawn brought Udaipur and a French bedstead. As the tonga jingled away, the Englishman heard the familiar crack of broken harness. So he was not the Jonah he had been taught to consider himself all through that night of penance!

A jackal sat in the veranda and howled him to sleep, and he dreamed that he caught a Viceroy under the walls of Chitor and beat him with a tulwar till he turned into a dak-pony whose near foreleg was perpetually coming off and who would say nothing but *tum* when he was asked why he had not built a railway from Chitor to Udaipur.

## VII.

It was worth a night's discomfort and revolver-beds to sleep upon—this city of the Suryavansi, hidden among the hills that encompass the great Pichola lake. Truly, the King who governs to-day is wise in his determination to have no railroad to his capital. His predecessor was more or less enlightened, and had he lived a few years longer, would have brought the iron horse through the Dobbari—the green gate which is the entrance of the Girwa or girdle of hills around Udai-pur; and, with the train, would have come the tourist who would have scratched his name upon the Temple of Garuda and laughed horse-laugh upon the lake. Let us, therefore, be thankful that the capital of Mewar is hard to reach.

Each man in this land who has any claims to respectability walks armed, carrying his tulwar sheathed in his hand, or hung by a short sling of cotton passing over the shoulder, under his left armpit. His matchlock, or smooth-bore, if he has one, is borne naked on the shoulder.

Now it is possible to carry any number of lethal weapons without being actually dangerous. An unhandy revolver, for instance, may be worn for years, and, at the end, ac-

compleish nothing more noteworthy than the murder of its owner. But the Rajput's weapons are not meant for display. The Englishman caught a camel-driver who talked to him in Mewari, which is a heathenish dialect, something like Multani to listen to ; and the man, very gracefully and courteously, handed him his sword and matchlock, the latter a heavy stump-stock arrangement without pretense of sights. The blade was as sharp as a razor, and the gun in perfect working order. The coiled fuse on the stock was charred at the end, and the curled ram's-horn powder-horn opened as readily as a much-handled whisky-flask. Unfortunately, ignorance of Mewari prevented conversation ; so the camel-driver resumed his accoutrements and jogged forward on his beast—a superb black one, with the short curled *hubshee* hair—while the Englishman went to the city, which is built on hills on the borders of the lake. By the way, everything in Udaipur is built on a hill. There is no level ground in the place, except the Durbar Gardens, of which more hereafter. Because color holds the eye more than form, the first thing noticeable was neither temple nor fort, but an ever-recurring picture, painted in the rudest form of native art, of a man on horseback armed with a lance, charging an elephant-of-war. As a rule, the elephant was depicted on one side the house-door and the rider on the other. There was no representation of an army behind. The fig-

ures stood alone upon the whitewash on house and wall and gate, again and again and again. A highly intelligent priest grunted that it was a picture; a private of the Maharana's regular army suggested that it was an elephant; while a wheat-seller, his sword at his side, was equally certain that it was a Raja. Beyond that point, his knowledge did not go. The explanation of the picture is this. In the days when Raja Maun of Amber put his sword at Akbar's service and won for him great kingdoms, Akbar sent an army against Mewar, whose then ruler was Pertap Singh, most famous of all the princes of Mewar. Selim, Akbar's son, led the army of the Toork; the Rajputs met them at the pass of Huldighat and fought till one-half of their band was slain. Once, in the press of battle, Pertap on his great horse, Chytak, came within striking distance of Selim's elephant, and slew the mahout, but Selim escaped, to become Jehangir afterwards, and the Rajputs were broken. That was three hundred years ago, and men have reduced the picture to a sort of diagram that the painter dashes in, in a few minutes, without, it would seem, knowing what he is commemorating.

Thinking of these things, the Englishman made shift to get to the city, and presently came to a tall gate, the gate of the Sun, on which the elephant-spikes, that he had seen rotted with rust at Amber, were new and pointed and effective. The City gates are

said to be shut at night, and there is a story of a Viceroy's Guard-of-Honor which arrived before daybreak, being compelled to crawl ignominiously man by man through a little wicket-gate, while the horses had to wait without till sunrise. But a civilized yearning for the utmost advantages of octroi, and not a fierce fear of robbery and wrong, is at the bottom of the continuance of this custom. The walls of the City are loopholed for musketry, but there seem to be no mounting for guns, and the moat without the walls is dry and gives cattle pasture. Coarse rubble in concrete faced with stone makes the walls moderately strong.

Internally, the City is surprisingly clean, though with the exception of the main street, paved after the fashion of Jullundur, of which, men say, the pavement was put down in the time of Alexander and worn by myriads of naked feet into deep barrels and grooves. In the case of Udaipur, the feet of the passengers have worn the rock veins that crop out everywhere, smooth and shiny; and in the rains the narrow gullies must spout like fire-hoses. The people have been untouched by cholera for four years, proof that Providence looks after those who do not look after themselves, for Neemuch Cantonment, a hundred miles away, suffered grievously last summer. "And what do you make in Udaipur?" "Swords," said the man in the shop, throwing down an armful of *tulwars*, *kuttars*, and *khandas* on the

stones. "Do you want any? Look here!" Hereat, he took up one of the commoner swords and flourished it in the sunshine. Then he bent it double, and, as it sprang straight, began to make it "speak." Arm-venders in Udaipur are a sincere race, for they sell to people who really use their wares. The man in the shop was rude—distinctly so. His first flush of professional enthusiasm abated, he took stock of the Englishman and said calmly: "What do *you* want with a sword?" Then he picked up his goods and retreated, while certain small boys, who deserved a smacking, laughed riotously from the coping of a little temple hard by. Swords seem to be the sole manufacture of the place. At least, none of the inhabitants the Englishman spoke to could think of any other.

There is a certain amount of personal violence in and about the State, or else where would be the good of the weapons? There are occasionally dacoities more or less important; but these are not often heard of, and, indeed, there is no special reason why they should be dragged into the light of an unholy publicity, for the land governs itself in its own way, and is always in its own way, which is by no means ours, very happy. The Thakurs live, each in his own castle on some rock-faced hill, much as they lived in the days of Tod; though their chances of distinguishing themselves, except in the school, and dispensary line, are strictly limited. Nominally, they pay



*chutoond*, or a sixth of their revenues to the State, and are under feudal obligations to supply their Head with so many horsemen per thousand rupees; but whether the *chutoond* justifies its name and what is the exact extent of the "tail" leviable, they, and perhaps the Rajputana Agency, alone know. They are quiet, give no trouble except to the wild boar, and personally are magnificent men to look at. The Rajput shows his breeding in his hands and feet, which are almost disproportionately small, and as well shaped as those of a woman. His stirrups and sword-handles are even more unusable by Westerns than those elsewhere in India, whereas the Bhil's knife-handle gives as large a grip as an English one. Now the little Bhil is an aborigine, which is humiliating to think of. His tongue, which may frequently be heard in the City, seems to possess some variant of the Zulu click, which gives it a weird and unearthly character. From the main gate of the City the Englishman climbed uphill towards the Palace and the Jugdesh Temple built by one Juggat Singh at the beginning of the last century. This building must be—but ignorance is a bad guide—Jain in character. From basement to the stone socket of the temple flagstaff, it is carved in high relief with elephants, men, gods, and monsters in friezes of wearying profusion.

The management of the temple have daubed a large portion of the building with whitewash,

for which their revenues should be "cut" for a year or two. The main shrine holds a large brazen image of Garuda, and, in the corners of the courtyard of the main pile, are shrines to Mahadeo, and the jovial, pot-bellied Ganesh. There is no repose in this architecture, and the entire effect is one of repulsion; for the clustered figures of man and brute seem always on the point of bursting into unclean, wriggling life. But it may be that the builders of this form of house desired to put the fear of all their many gods into the hearts of the worshipers.

From the temple whose steps are worn smooth by the feet of men, and whose courts are full of the faint smell of stale flowers and old incense, the Englishman went to the Palaces which crown the highest hill overlooking the City. Here, too, whitewash had been unsparingly applied, but the excuse was that the stately fronts and the pierced screens were built of a perishable stone which needed protection against the weather. One projecting window in the façade of the main palace had been treated with Minton tiles. Luckily it was too far up the wall for anything more than the color to be visible, and the pale blue against the pure white was effective.

A picture of Ganesh looks out over the main courtyard, which is entered by a triple gate, and hard by is the place where the King's elephants fight over a low masonry wall. In the side of the hill on which the

Palaces stand is built stabling for horses and elephants—proof that the architects of old must have understood their business thoroughly. The Palace is not a “show place,” and, consequently, the Englishman did not see much of the interior. But he passed through open gardens with tanks and pavilions, very cool and restful, till he came suddenly upon the Pichola lake, and forgot altogether about the Palace. He found a sheet of steel-blue water, set in purple and gray hills, bound in, on one side, by marble bunds, the fair white walls of the Palace, and the gray, time-worn ones of the city; and, on the other, fading away through the white of shallow water, and the soft green of weed, marsh, and rank-pastured river-field, into the land.

To enjoy open water thoroughly, live for a certain number of years barred from anything better than the yearly swell and shrinkage of one of the Five Rivers, and then come upon two and a half miles of solid, restful lake, with a cool wind blowing off it and little waves spitting against the piers of a veritable, albeit hideously ugly, boat-house. On the faith of an exile from the Sea, you will not stay long among Palaces, be they never so lovely, or in little rooms paneled with Dutch tiles.

And here follows a digression. There is no life so good as the life of a loafer who travels by rail and road; for all things and all people are kind to him. From the chill

miseries of a dak-bungalow where they slew one hen with as much parade as the French guillotined Pranzini, to the well-ordered sumptuousness of the Residency, was a step bridged over by kindly and unquestioning hospitality. So it happened that the Englishman was not only able to go upon the lake in a soft-cushioned boat, with everything handsome about him, but might, had he chosen, have killed wild-duck with which the lake swarms.

The mutter of water under a boat's nose was a pleasant thing to hear once more. Starting at the head of the lake, he found himself shut out from sight of the main sheet of water in a loch bounded by a sunk, broken bund to steer across which was a matter of some nicety. Beyond that lay a second pool spanned by a narrow-arched bridge built, men said, long before the City of the Rising Sun, which is little more than three hundred years old. The bridge connects the City with Brahmapura—a white-walled enclosure filled with many Brahmins and ringing with the noise of their conches. Beyond the bridge, the body of the lake, with the City running down to it, comes into full view ; and Providence has arranged for the benefit of such as delight in colors, that the Rajputni shall wear the most striking tints that she can buy in the bazaars, in order that she may beautify the ghâts where she comes to bathe.

The bathing-ledge at the foot of the City

wall was lighted with women clad in raw vermilion, dull red, indigo and sky-blue, saffron and pink and turquoise; the water faithfully doubling everything. But the first impression was of the unreality of the sight, for the Englishman found himself thinking of the Simla Fine Arts Exhibition and the overdaring amateurs who had striven to reproduce scenes such as these. Then a woman rose up, and clasping her hands behind her head, looked at the passing boat, and the ripples spread out from her waist, in blinding white silver, far across the water. As a picture, a daringly insolent picture, it was superb.

The boat turned aside to shores where huge turtles were lying, and a stork had built her nest, big as a haycock, in a withered tree, and a bevy of coots were flapping and gabbling in the weeds or between great leaves of the *Victoria regia*—an “escape” from the State Gardens. Here were divers and waders, kingfishers and snaky-necked birds of the cormorant family, but no duck. They had seen the guns in the boat and were flying to and fro in companies across the lake, or settling—wise things!—in the glare of the sun on the water. The lake was swarming with them, but they seemed to know exactly how far a twelve-bore would carry. Perhaps their knowledge had been gained from the Englishman at the Residency. Later, as the sun left the lake, and the hills began to glow like opals, the boat made her way to the

shallow side of the lake, through fields of watergrass and dead lotus-affle that rose as high as the bows and clung lovingly about the rudder, and parted with the noise of silk when it is torn. There she waited for the fall of twilight when the duck would come home to bed, and the Englishman sprawled upon the cushions in deep content and laziness, as he looked across to where two marble Palaces floated upon the waters and saw all the glory and beauty of the City, and wondered whether Tod, in cocked hat and stiff stock, had ever come shooting among the reeds, and, if so, how in the world he had ever managed to bowl over. . . .

“Duck and drake, by Jove! Confiding beasts, weren’t they. Hi! Lalla, jump out and get them!” It was a brutal thing, this double-barreled murder penetrated in the silence of the marsh when the kingly wild-duck came back from his wanderings with his mate at his side, but—but—the birds were very good to eat.

If the Venetian owned the Pichola Sagar he might say with justice: “See it and die.” But it is better to live and go to dinner, and strike into a new life—that of the men who bear the hat-mark on their brow as plainly as the well-born native carries the *trisol* of Shiva.

They are of the same caste as the toilers on the Frontier—tough, bronzed men, with wrinkles at the corners of the eyes, gotten by looking across much sun-glare. When they

would speak of horses they mention Arab ponies, and their talk, for the most part, drifts Bombaywards, or to Abu, which is their Simla. By these things the traveler may see that he is far away from the Presidency; and will presently learn that he is in a land where the railway is an incident and not an indispensable luxury. Folk tell strange stories of drives in bullock-carts in the rains, of break downs in nullahs fifty miles from everywhere, and of elephants that used to sink for rest and refreshment half-way across swollen streams. Every place here seems fifty miles from everywhere and the legs of a horse are regarded as the only natural means of locomotion. Also, and this to the Indian Cockney, who is accustomed to the bleached or office man, is curious, there are to be found many veritable "tiger-men"—not story-spinners, but such as have, in their wanderings from Bikaner to Indore, dropped their tiger in the way of business. They are enthusiastic over princelings of little known fiefs, lords of austere estates perched on the tops of unthrifty hills, hard riders, and good sportsmen. And five, six, yes, fully nine hundred miles to the northward, lives the sister branch of the same caste—the men who swear by Pathan, Biluch, and Brahui, with whom they have shot or broken bread.

There is a saying in Upper India that the more desolate the country, the greater the certainty of finding a Padre-Sahib. The proverb seems to hold good in Udaipur, where



the Scotch Presbyterian Mission have a post, and others at Todgarh to the north and elsewhere. To arrive, under Providence, at the cure of souls through the curing of bodies certainly seems the rational method of conversion ; and this is exactly what the Missions are doing. Their Padre in Udaipur is also an M. D., and of him a rather striking tale is told. Conceiving that the City could bear another hospital in addition to the State one, he took furlough, went home, and there, by crusade and preaching raised sufficient money for the scheme, so that none might say that he was beholden to the State. Returning, he built his hospital, a very model of neatness and comfort, and, opening the operation-book, announced his readiness to see any one and every one who was sick. How the call was and is now responded to, the dry records of that book will show ; and the name of the Padre-Sahib is honored, as these ears have heard, throughout Udaipur and far around. The faith that sends a man into the wilderness, and the secular-energy which enables him to cope with an ever-growing demand for medical aid, must, in time, find their reward. If patience and unwearying self-sacrifice carry any merit, they should do so soon. To-day the people are willing enough to be healed, and the general influence of the Padre-Sahib is very great. But beyond that. . . . Still it was impossible to judge aright.



## VIII.

IN this land men tell "sad stories of the death of Kings" not easily found elsewhere; and also speak of *sati*, which is generally supposed to be out of date in a manner which makes it seem very near and vivid. Be pleased to listen to some of the tales, but with all the names cut out, because a King has just as much right to have his family affairs respected as has a British householder paying income tax.

Once upon a time, that is to say when the British power was well established in the land and there were railways, was a King who lay dying for many days, and all, including the Englishmen about him, knew that his end was certain. But he had chosen to lie in an outer court or pleasure-house of his Palace; and with him were some twenty of his favorite wives. The place in which he lay was very near to the city; and there was a fear that his womankind should, on his death, going mad with grief, cast off their veils and run out into the streets, uncovered before all men. In which case nothing, not even the power of the Press, and the locomotive, and the telegraph, and cheap education and enlightened municipal councils, could have saved them from the

burning-pyre, for they were the wives of a King. So the Political did his best to induce the dying man to go to the Fort of the City, a safe place close to the regular zenana, where all the women could be kept within walls. He said that the air was better in the Fort, but the King refused; and that he would recover in the Fort; but the King refused. After some days, the latter turned and said: "*Why* are you so keen, Sahib, upon getting my old bones up to the Fort?" Driven to his last defences, the Political said simply: "Well, Maharana Sahib, the place is close to the road, you see, and . . . ." The King saw and said: "Oh, *that's* it? I've been puzzling my brain for four days to find out what on earth you were driving at. I'll go to-night." "But there may be some difficulty," began the Political. "You think so," said the King. "If I only hold up my little finger, the women will obey me. Go now, and come back in five minutes, and all will be ready for departure." As a matter of fact, the Political withdrew for the space of fifteen minutes, and gave orders that the conveyances which he had kept in readiness day and night should be got ready. In fifteen minutes those twenty women, with their hand-maidens, were packed and ready for departure; and the King died later at the Fort, and nothing happened. Here the Englishman asked why a frantic woman must of necessity become a *sati*, and felt properly abashed when he was told that she *must*.

There was nothing else for her if she went out unveiled.

The rush-out forces the matter. And, indeed, if you consider the matter from the Rajput point of view it does.

Then followed a very grim tale of the death of another King; of the long vigil by his bedside, before he was taken off the bed to die upon the ground; of the shutting of a certain mysterious door behind the bed-head, which shutting was followed by a rustle of women's dress; of a walk on the top of the palace, to escape the heated air of the sick room; and then, in the gray dawn, the wail upon wail breaking from the zenana as the news of the King's death went in. "I never wish to hear anything more horrible and awful in my life. You could see nothing. You could only hear the poor wretches," said the Political, with a shiver.

The last resting-place of the Maharanas of Udaipur is at Ahar, a little village two miles east of the City. Here they go down in their robes of state, their horse following behind, and here the Political saw, after the death of a Maharana, the dancing-girls dancing before the poor white ashes, the musicians playing among the cenotaphs, and the golden hookah, sword, and water-vessel laid out for the naked soul doomed to hover twelve days round the funeral pyre, before it could depart on its journey toward a fresh birth. Once, in a neighboring State it is said, one of the danc-

ing-girls stole a march in the next world's precedence and her lord's affections, upon the legitimate queens. The affair happened, by the way, after the Mutiny, and was accomplished with great pomp in the light of day. Subsequently those who might have stopped it but did not, were severely punished. The girl said that she had no one to look to but the dead man, and followed him, to use 'Tod's formula, "through the flames." It would be curious to know whether *sati* is altogether abolished among these lonely hills in the walled holds of the Thakurs.

But to return from the burning-ground to modern Udaipur, as at present worked under the Maharana and his Prime Minister Rae Punna Lal, *C. I. E.* To begin with, His Highness is a racial anomaly in that, judged by the strictest European standard, he is a man of temperate life, the husband of one wife whom he married before he was chosen to the throne after the death of the Maharana Sujjun Singh in 1884. Sujjun Singh died childless and gave no hint of his desires as to succession and—omitting all the genealogical and political reasons which would drive a man mad—Futteh Singh was chosen, by the Thakurs, from the Seorati Branch of the family which Sangram Singh II. founded. He is thus a younger son of a younger branch of a younger family, which lucid statement should suffice to explain everything. The man who could deliberately unravel the succession of

any one of the Rajput States would be perfectly capable of explaining the politics of all the Frontier tribes from Jumrood to Quetta.

Roughly speaking, the Maharana and the Prime Minister—in whose family the office has been hereditary for many generations—divide the power of the State. They control, more or less, the Mahand Raj Sabha or council of Direction and Revision. This is composed of many of the Rawats and Thakurs of the State, *and* the Poet Laureate who, under a less genial administration, would be presumably the Registrar. There are also District Officers, Officers of Customs, Superintendents of the Mint, Masters of the Horses, and Supervisor of Doles, which last is pretty and touching. The State officers itself, and the Englishman's investigations failed to unearth any Bengalis. The Commandant of the State Army, about five thousand men of all arms, is a retired non-commissioned officer, a Mr. Lonergan; who, as the medals on his breast attest, has done the State some service, and now in his old age rejoices in the local rank of Major-General, and teaches the Maharaja's guns to make uncommonly good practice. The Infantry are smart and well set up, while the Cavalry—rare thing in Native States—have a distinct notion of keeping their accouterments clean. They are, further, well mounted on light, wiry Mewar and Kathiawar horses. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that the Pathan comes down with his pickings from

the Punjab to Udaipur, and finds a market there for animals that were much better employed in our service—but the complaint is a stale one. Let us see, later on, what the Jodhpur stables hold ; and then formulate an indictment against the Government. So much for the indigenous administration of Udaipur. The one drawback in the present Maharaja, from the official point of view, is his want of education. He is a thoroughly good man, but was not brought up with the kingship before his eyes, consequently he is not an English-speaking man.

There is a story told of him which is worth the repeating. An Englishman who flattered himself that he could speak the vernacular fairly well, paid him a visit and discoursed with a round mouth. The Maharana heard him politely, and turning to a satellite, demanded a translation ; which was given. Then said the Maharana :—" Speak to him in *Angrezi*." The *Angrezi* spoken by the interpreter was Urdu as the Sahibs speak it and the Englishman, having ended his conference, departed abashed. But this backwardness is eminently suited to a place like Udaipur, and a European prince is not always a desirable thing. The curious and even startling simplicity of his life is worth preserving. Here is a specimen of one of his days. Rising at four—and the dawn can be bitterly chill—he bathes and prays after the custom of his race, and at six is ready to take in hand the first instalment

of the day's work which comes before him through his Prime Minister, and occupies him for three or four hours till the first meal of the day is ready. At two o'clock he attends the Mahand Raj Sabha, and works till five, retiring at a healthily primitive hour. He is said to have his hand fairly, firmly upon the reins of rule, and to know as much as most monarchs know of the way in which his revenues—some thirty lakhs—are disposed of. The Prime Minister's career has been a chequered and interesting one, including a dismissal from power (this was worked by the Queens from behind the scene), an arrest, and an attack with swords which all but ended in his murder. He has not so much power as his predecessors had, for the reason that the present Maharaja allows little but tiger-shooting to distract him from the supervision of the State. His Highness, by the way, is a first-class shot and has bagged eighteen tigers already. He preserves his game carefully, and permission to kill tigers is not readily obtainable.

A curious instance of the old order giving place to the new is in process of evolution and deserves notice. The Prime Minister's son, Futteh Lal, a boy of twenty years old, has been educated at the Mayo College, Ajmir, and speaks and writes English. There are few native officials in the State who do this; and the consequence is that the lad has won a very fair insight into State affairs, and



knows generally what is going forward both in the Eastern and Western spheres of the little Court. In time he may qualify for direct administrative powers, and Udaipur will be added to the list of the States that are governed English fashion. What the end will be, after three generations of Princes and Dewans have been put through the mill of the Rajkumar Colleges, those who live will learn.

More interesting is the question, For how long can the vitality of a people whose life was arms be suspended? Men in the North say that, by the favor of the Government which brings peace, the Sikh Sirdars are rotting on their lands; and the Rajput Thakurs say of themselves that they are growing rusty. The old, old problem forces itself on the most unreflective mind at every turn in the gay streets of Udaipur. A Frenchman might write: "Behold there the horse of the Rajput—foaming, panting, caracoling, but always fettered with his head so majestic upon his bosom so amply filled with a generous heart. He rages, but he does not advance. See there the destiny of the Rajput who bestrides him, and upon whose left flank bounds the saber useless—the haberdashery of the iron-monger only! Pity the horse in reason, for that life there is his *raison d'être*. Pity ten thousand times more the Rajput, for he has no *raison d'être*. He is an anachronism in a blue turban."



The Gaul might be wrong, but Tod wrote things which seem to support this view, in the days when he wished to make "buffer-states" of the land he loved so well.

Let us visit the Durbar Gardens, where little naked Cupids are trampling upon fountains of fatted fish, all in bronze, where there are cypresses and red paths, and a deer-park full of all varieties of deer, besides two growling, fluffy little panther cubs, a black panther who is the Prince of Darkness and a gentleman, and a terrace-full of tigers, bears, and Guzerat lions brought from the King of Oudh's sale.

## IX.

ABOVE the Durbar Gardens lie low hills, in which the Maharana keeps, very strictly guarded, his pig and his deer, and anything else that may find shelter in the low scrub or under the scattered boulders. These preserves are scientifically parceled out with high, red-stone walls; and here and there are dotted tiny shooting-stands—masonry sentry-boxes, in which five or six men may sit at ease and shoot. It had been arranged to entertain the Englishmen who were gathered at the Residency to witness the investiture of the King with the G. C. S. I.—that there should be a little pig-drive in front of the Kala Odey or black shooting-box. The Rajput is a man and a brother, in respect that he will ride, shoot, eat pig, and drink strong waters like an Englishman. Of the pig-hunting he makes almost a religious duty, and of the wine-drinking no less. Read how desperately they used to ride in Udaipur at the beginning of the century when Tod, always in his cocked hat to be sure, counted up the tale of accidents at the end of the day's sport.

There is something unfair in shooting pig; but each man who went out consoled himself with the thought that it was utterly impossible

to ride the brutes up the almost perpendicular hillsides, or down rocky ravines, and that he individually would only go "just for the fun of the thing." Those who stayed behind made rude remarks on the subject of "pork butchers," and the dangers that attended shooting from a balcony. There are ways and ways of slaying pig—from the orthodox method which begins with "*The Boar—the Boar—the mighty Boar!*" overnight, and ends with a shaky bridle-hand next morn, to the sober and solitary pot-shot at dawn, from a railway embankment running through river marsh; but the perfect way is this. Get a large, four-horse break, and drive till you meet an unlimited quantity of pad-elephants waiting at the foot of rich hill-preserves. Mount slowly and with dignity, and go in swinging procession, by the marble-faced border of one of the most lovely lakes on earth. Strike off on a semi-road, semi-hill-torrent path through unthrifty, thorny jungle, and so climb up and up and up, till you see, spread like a map below, the lake and the Palace and the City, hemmed in by the sea of hills that lies between Udaipur and Mount Abu a hundred miles away. Then take your seat in a comfortable chair, in a fine two-storied Grand Stand, with an awning spread atop to keep off the sun, while the Rawat of Amet and the Prime Minister's heir—no less—invite you to take your choice of the many rifles spread on a ledge at the front of the building. This, gentlemen who screw

your pet ponies at early dawn after the sounder that vanishes into cover soon as sighted, or painfully follow the tiger through the burning heats of Mewar in May, this is shooting after the fashion of Ouida—in musk and ambergris and patchouli.

It is demoralizing. One of the best and hardest riders of the Lahore Tent Club in the old days, as the boars of Bouli Lena Singh knew well, said openly: "This is a first-class scheme," and fell to testing his triggers as though he had been a pot-hunter from his birth. Derision and threats of exposure moved him not. "Give me an armchair!" said he. "This is the proper way to deal with pig!" And he put up his feet on the ledge and stretched himself.

There were many weapons to choose from the double-barreled '500 Express, whose bullet is a tearing, rending shell, to the Rawat of Amet's regulation military Martini-Henri. A profane public at the Residency had suggested clubs and saws as amply sufficient for the work in hand. Here they were moved by envy, which passion was tenfold increased when—but this comes later on. The beat was along a deep gorge in the hills, flanked on either crest by stone walls, manned with beaters. Immediately opposite the shooting-box, the wall on the upper or higher hill made a sharp turn down-hill, contracting the space through which the pig would have to pass to a gut which was variously said to be from one

hundred and fifty to four hundred yards across. Most of the shooting was up or down hill.

A philanthropic desire not to murder more Bhils than were absolutely necessary to maintain a healthy current of human life in the Hilly Tracts, coupled with a well founded dread of the hinder, or horse, end of a double-barreled '500 Express which would be sure to go off both barrels together, led the Englishman to take a gunless seat in the background. Then a silence fell upon the party, and very far away up the gorge the heated afternoon air was cut by the shrill tremolo squeal of the Bhil beaters. Now a man may be in no sort or fashion a *shikari*—may hold Buddhistic objections to the slaughter of living things—but there is something in the extraordinary noise of an agitated Bhil, which makes even the most peaceful mortals get up and yearn, like Tartarin of Tarescon for “lions,” always at a safe distance be it understood. As the beat drew nearer, under the squealing—the “*ul-ul-lu-lu-lu*”—was heard a long-drawn bittern-like boom of “*So-oor!*” “*So-oor!*” (Pig! Pig!) and the crashing of boulders. The guns rose in their places, forgetting that each and all had merely come “to see the fun,” and began to fumble among the little mounds of cartridges under the chairs. Presently, tripping delicately over the rocks, a pig stepped out of a cactus-bush, and the fusillade began. The dust flew and the branches chipped, but the pig went on—a

blue-gray shadow almost undistinguishable against the rocks, and took no harm. "Sighting shots," said the guns, sulkily. The beat came nearer, and then the listener discovered what the bubbling scream was like; for he forgot straightway about the beat and went back to the dusk of an Easter Monday in the Gardens of the Crystal Palace before the bombardment of Kars, "set piece ten thousand feet square" had been illuminated, and about five hundred 'Arries were tickling a thousand 'Arriets. Their giggling and nothing else was the noise of the Bhil. So curiously does Sydenham and Western Rajputana meet. Then came another pig, who was smitten to the death and rolled down among the bushes, drawing his last breath in a human and horrible manner.

But full on the crest of the hill, blown along—there is no other word to describe it—like a ball of thistledown, passed a brown shadow, and men cried: "*Bagheera*," or "Panther!" according to their nationalities, and blazed. The shadow leaped the wall that had turned the pig downhill, and vanished among the cactus. "Never mind," said the Prime Minister's son, consolingly, "we'll beat the other side of the hill afterwards and get him yet." "Oh, he's a mile off by this time," said the guns; but the Rawat of Amet, a magnificent young man, smiled a sweet smile and said nothing. More pig passed and were slain, and many more broke back through the beat-

ers who presently came through the cover in scores. They were in russet green and red uniform, each man bearing a long spear, and the hillside was turned on the instant to a camp of Robin Hood's foresters. Then they brought up the dead from behind bushes and under rocks—among others a twenty-seven-inch brute who bore on his flank (all pigs shot in a beat are *ex-officio* boars) a hideous, half-healed scar, big as a man's hand, of a bullet wound. Express bullets are ghastly things in their effects, for, as the *shikari*, is never tired of demonstrating, they knock the inside of the animals into pulp.

The second beat, of the reverse side of the hill, had barely begun when the panther returned—uneasily as if something were keeping her back—much lower down the hill. Then the face of the Rawat of Amet changed, as he brought his gun up to his shoulder. Looking at him as he fired, one forgot all about the Mayo College at which he had been educated, and remembered only some trivial and out-of-date affairs, in which his forefathers had been concerned, when a bridegroom, with his bride at his side, charged down the slope of the Chitor road and died among Akbar's men. There are stories connected with the House of Amet, which are told in Mewar to-day. The young man's face, for as short a time as it takes to pull trigger and see where the bullet falls, was a white light upon all these tales.

Then the mask shut down, as he clicked out the cartridge, and, very sweetly, gave it as his opinion that some other gun, not his own, had bagged the panther who lay shot through the spine, feebly trying to drag herself downhill into cover. It is an awful thing to see a big beast die, when the soul is wrenched out of the struggling body in ten seconds. Wild horses shall not make the Englishman disclose the exact number of shots that were fired. It is enough to say that four Englishmen, now scattered to the four winds of heaven, are each morally certain that he and he alone shot that panther. In time, when distance and the mirage of the sands of Uodhpur shall have softened the harsh outlines of truth, the Englishman who did *not* fire a shot will come to believe that he was the real slayer, and will carefully elaborate that lie.

A few minutes after the murder, a two-year-old cub came trotting along the hillside, and was bowled over by a very pretty shot behind the left ear and through the palate. Then the beaters' lances showed through the bushes, and the guns began to realize that they had allowed to escape, or had driven back by their fire, a multitude of pig.

This ended the beat, and the procession returned to the Residency to heap dead panthers upon those who had called them "pork butchers," and to stir up the lake of envy with



the torpedo of brilliant description. The Englishman's attempt to compare the fusillade which greeted the panther to the continuous drumming of a ten-barreled Nordenfeldt was, however, coldly received. Thus harshly is truth treated all the world over.

And then, after a little time, came the end, and a return to the road in search of new countries. But shortly before the departure, the Padre-Sahib, who knows every one in Udaipur, read a sermon in a sentence. The Maharana's investiture, which has already been described in the Indian papers, had taken place, and the carriages, duly escorted by the Erinpura Horse, were returning to the Residency. In a niche of waste land, under the shadow of the main gate, a place strewn with rubbish and shards of pottery, a dilapidated old man was trying to control his horse and a *hookah* on the saddle-bow. The blundering garron had been made restive by the rush past, and the *hookah* all but fell from the hampered hands. "See that man," said the Padre, tersely. "That's — Singh. He intrigued for the throne not so very long ago." It was a pitiful little picture, and needed no further comment.

For the benefit of the loafer it should be noted that Udaipur will never be pleasant or accessible until the present Mail Contractors have been hanged. They are extortionate and untruthful, and their one set of harness and one tonga are as rotten as pears. How-

ever, the weariness of the flesh must be great indeed, to make the wanderer blind to the beauties of a journey by clear starlight and in biting cold to Chitor. . About six miles from Udaipur, the granite hills close in upon the road, and the air grows warmer until, with a rush and a rattle, the tonga swings through the great Dobarra, the gate in the double circle of hills round Udaipur on to the pastures of Mewar. More than once the Girwa has been a death-trap to those who rashly entered it ; and an army has been cut up on the borders of the Pichola Lake. Even now the genius of the place is strong upon the hills, and as he felt the cold air from the open ground without the barrier, the Englishman found himself repeating the words of one of the Hat-marked tribe whose destiny kept him within the Dobarra. "You must have a hobby of some kind in these parts or you'll die." Very lovely is Udaipur, and thrice pleasant are a few days spent within her gates, but. . . read what Tod said who stayed two years behind the Dobarra, and accepted the deserts of Marwar as a delightful change.

It is good to be free, a wanderer upon the highways, knowing not what to-morrow will bring forth—whether the walled-in niceties of an English household, rich in all that makes life fair and desirable, or a sleepless night in the society of a goods-*cum*-booking-office-*cum*-parcels-clerk, on fifteen rupees a month, who tells in stilted English the story of his official

life, while the telegraph gibbers like a maniac once in an hour and then is dumb, and the pariah-dogs fight and howl over the cotton-bales on the platform.

Verily, there is no life like life on the road—when the skies are cool and all men are kind.

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## X

THERE is a certain want of taste, an almost actual indecency, in seeing the sun rise on the earth. Until the heat-haze begins and the distances thicken, Nature is so very naked that the Actæon who has surprised her dressing, blushes. Sunrise on the plains of Mewar is an especially brutal affair.

The moon was burnt out and the air was bitterly cold, when the Englishman headed due east in his tonga, and the patient sowar behind nodded and yawned in the saddle. There was no warning of the day's advent. The horses were unharnessed, at one halting-stage, in the thick, soft shadows of night, and ere their successors had limped under the bar, a raw and cruel light was upon all things, so that the Englishman could see every rent seam in the rocks around. A little further, and he came upon the black bulk of Chitor between him and the morning sun. It has already been said that the Fort resembles a man-of-war. Every distant view heightens this impression, for the swell of the sides follows the form of a ship, and the bastions on the south wall make the sponsons in which the machine-guns are mounted. From bow to stern, the thing more than three miles long, is between three and five hundred feet high,

and from one-half to one-quarter of a mile broad. Have patience, now, to listen to a rough history of Chitor.

In the beginning, no one knows clearly who scraped the hillsides of the hill rising out of the bare plain, and made of it a place of strength. It is written that, eleven and a half centuries ago, Bappa Rawul, the demigod whose stature was twenty cubits, whose loin-cloth was five hundred feet long, and whose spear was beyond the power of mortal man to lift, took Chitor from "Man Singh, the Mori Prince," and wrote the first chapter of the history of Mewar, which he received ready-made from Man Singh who, if the chronicles speak sooth, was his uncle. Many and very marvelous legends cluster round the name of Bappa Rawul; and he is said to have ended his days far away from India, in Khorasan, where he married an unlimited number of the Daughters of Heth, and was the father of all the Nowshera Pathans. Some who have wandered, by the sign-posts of inscription, into the fogs of old time, aver that, two centuries before Bappa Rawul took Chitor the Mori division of the Prammar Rajputs, who are the ruling family of Mewar, had found a hold in Bhilwara, and for four centuries before that time had ruled in Kathiawar; and had royally sacked and slain and been sacked and slain in turn. But these things are for the curious and the scholar, and not for the reader who reads lightly.

Nine princes succeeded Bappa, between 728 and 1068 A. D., and among these was one Alluji, who built a Jain tower upon the brow of the hill, for in those days, though the Sun was worshiped, men were all Jains.

And here they lived and sallied into the plains, and fought and increased the borders of their kingdom, or were suddenly and stealthily murdered or stood shoulder to shoulder against the incursions of the "Devil men" from the north. In 1150 A. D. was born Samar Singh, and he married into the family of Prithi Raj, the last Hindu Emperor of Delhi, who was at feud, in regard to a succession question, with the Prince of Kanauj. In the war that followed, Kanauj, being hard pressed by Prithi Raj, and Samar Singh, called Shahabuddin Chori to his aid. At first, Samar Singh and Prithi Raj broke the army of the Northern somewhere in the lower Punjab, but two years later Shahabuddin came again, and, after three days' fighting on the banks of the Kaggar, slew Samar Singh, captured and murdered Prithi Raj, and sacked Delhi and Amber, while Samar Singh's favorite queen became *sati* at Chitor. But another wife, a princess of Patun, kept her life, and when Shahabuddin sent down Kutbuddin to waste her lands, led the Rajput army, in person, from Chitor, and defeated Kutbuddin.

Then followed confusion, through eleven turbulent reigns that the annalist has failed to unravel. Once in the years between 1193 and

the opening of the fourteenth century, Chitor must have been taken by the Mussulman, for it is written that one prince "recovered Chitor and made the name of Rana to be recognized by all." Six princes were slain in battles against the Mussulman, in vain attempts to clear the land from the presence of the infidel.

Then Ala-ud-din Khilji, the Pathan Emperor swept the country to the Dekkan. In those days, and these things are confusedly set down as having happened at the end of the thirteenth century, a relative of Rana Lakhsman Singh, the then Rana of Chitor, had married a Rajput princess of Ceylon—Pudmini, "And she was fairest of all flesh on earth." Her fame was sung through the land by the poets, and she became, in some sort, the Helen of Chitor. Ala-ud-din heard of her beauty and promptly besieged the Fort. When he found his enterprise too difficult, he prayed that he might be permitted to see Pudmini's face in a mirror, and this wish, so says the tale, was granted. Knowing that the Rajput was a gentleman, he entered Chitor almost unarmed, saw the face in the mirror, and was well treated; the husband of the fair Pudmini accompanying him, in return, to the camp at the foot of the hill. Like Raja Runjeet in the ballad the Rajput he—

" . . . trusted a Mussulman's word

Wah ! Wah ! Trust a liar to lie.

Out of his eyrie they tempted my bird,

Fettered his wings that he could not fly."

Pudmini's husband was caught by a trick, and Ala-ud-din demanded Pudmini as the price of his return. The Rajputs here showed that they too could scheme, and sent, in great state, Pudmini's litter to the besiegers' intrenchments. But there was no Pudmini in the litter, and her following of handmaidens was a band of seven hundred armed men. Thus, in the confusion of a camp-fight, Pudmini's husband was rescued, and Ala-ud-din's soldiery followed hard on his heels to the gates of Chitor, where the best and bravest on the rock were killed before Ala-ud-din withdrew, only to return soon after and, with a doubled army, besiege in earnest. His first attack men called the half-sack of Chitor, for though he failed to win within the walls, he killed the flower of the Rajputs. The second attack ended in the first sack and the awful *sati* of the women on the rock.

When everything was hopeless and the very terrible Goddess, who lives in the bowels of Chitor, had spoken and claimed for the death eleven out of the twelve of the Rana's sons, all who were young or fair women betook themselves to a great underground chamber, and the fires were lit and the entrance was walled up and they died. The Rajputs opened the gates and fought till they could fight no more, and Ala-ud-din the victorious entered a wasted and desolated city. He wrecked everything except only the Palace of Pudmini and the old Jain tower before mentioned. That was all he could



do, for there were few men alive of the defenders of Chitor when the day was won, and the women were ashes underground.

Ajai Singh, the one surviving son of Lakhsman Singh, had at his father's insistence, escaped from Chitor to "carry on the line" when better days should come. He brought up Hamir, son of one of his elder brothers, to be a thorn in the side of the invader, and Hamir overthrew Meldeo, chief of Jhalore and vassal of Ala-ud-din, into whose hands Ala-ud-din had, not too generously, given what was left to Chitor. So the Sesodias came to their own again, and the successors of Hamir extended their kingdoms and rebuilt Chitor, as kings know how to rebuild cities in a land where human labor and life are cheaper than bread and water. For two centuries, saith Tod, Mewar flourished exceedingly and was the paramount kingdom of all Rajasthan. Greatest of all the successors of Hamir, was Kumbha Rana who, when the Ghilzai dynasty was rotting away and Viceroys declared themselves kings, met, defeated, took captive, and released without ransom, Mahmoud of Malwa. Kumbha Rana built a Tower of Victory, nine stories high, to commemorate this and the other successes of his reign, and the tower stands to-day a mark for miles across the plains.

But the well-established kingdom weakened, and the rulers took favorites and disgusted their best supporters—after the immemorial

custom of too prosperous rulers. Also they murdered one another. In 1535 A. D., Bahadur Shah, King of Gujarat, seeing the decay, and remembering how one of his predecessors, together with Mahmoud of Malwa, had been humbled by Mewar in years gone by, set out to take his revenge of Time and Mewar then ruled by Rana Bikrmajit, who had made a new capital at Deola. Bikrmajit did not stay to give battle in that place. His chiefs were out of hand, and Chitor was the heart and brain of Mewar; so he marched thither, and the Gods were against him. Bahadur Shah mined one of the Chitor bastions, and wiped out in the explosion the Hara Prince of Boondee, with five hundred followers. Jowahir Bae, Bikrmajit's mother, headed a sally from the walls, and was slain. There were Frank gunners among Bahadur Shah's forces, and they hastened the end. The Rajputs made a second *johur*, a sacrifice greater than the sacrifice of Pudmini; and thirteen thousand were blown up in the magazines, or stabbed or poisoned, before the gates were opened and the defenders rushed down.

Out of the carnage was saved Udai Singh, a babe of the Blood Royal, who grew up to be a coward, and a shame to his line. The story of his preservation is written large in Tod, and Edwin Arnold sings it. Read it, who are interested. But, when Udai Singh came to the throne of Chitor, through blood and misrule, after Bahadur Shah had withdrawn

from the wreck of the Fort, Akbar sat on the throne of Delhi, and it was written that few people should withstand the "Guardian of Mankind." Moreover, Udai Singh was the slave of a woman. It was Akbar's destiny to subdue the Rajputs, and to win many of them to his own service ; sending a Rajput Prince of Amber to get him far-away Arrakan. Akbar marched against Chitor once, and was repulsed ; the woman who ruled Udai Singh heading a charge against the besiegers because of the love she bore to her lover. Something of this sort had happened in Ala-ud-din's time, and, like Ala-ud-din, Akbar returned and sat down, in a huge camp, before Chitor in 1568 A. D. Udai Singh fled what was coming ; and because the Goddess of Chitor demands always that a crowned head must fall if the defense of her home is to be successful, Chitor fell as it had fallen before—in a *johur* of thousands, a last rush of the men, and the entry of the conqueror into a reeking, ruined slaughter-pen. Akbar's sack was the most terrible of the three, for he killed everything that had life upon the rock, and wrecked and overturned and spoiled. The wonder, the lasting wonder, is that he did not destroy Kumbha Rana's Tower of Victory, the memorial of the defeat of a Mahometan prince. With the third sack the glory of Chitor departed, and Udai Singh founded himself a new capital, the city of Udaipur. Though Chitor was recovered in Jehangir's time by Udai Singh's

grandson, it was never again made the capital of Mewar. It stood, and rotted where it stood, till enlightened and loyal feudatories, in the present years of grace, made attempts, with the help of Executive Engineers, to sweep it up and keep it in repair. The above is roughly, very roughly indeed, the tale of the sacks of Chitor.

Follows an interlude, for the study even of inaccurate history is indigestible to many. There was an elephant at Chitor, to take birds of passage up the hill, and she—she was fifty-one years old, and her name was Gerowlia—came to the dak-bungalow for the Englishman. Let not the word dak-bungalow deceive any man into believing that there is even moderate comfort at Chitor. Gerowlia waited in the sunshine, and chuckled to herself like a female pauper when she receives snuff. Her *mahout* said that he would go away for a drink of water. So he walked, and walked, and walked, till he disappeared on the stone-strewn plains, and the Englishman was left alone with Gerowlia, aged fifty-one. She had been tied by the chain on her near hind leg to a pillar of the veranda ; but the string was coir, and more an emblem of authority than a means of restraint. When she had thoroughly exhausted all the resources of the country within range of her trunk, she ate up the string and began to investigate the veranda. There was more coir string, and she ate it all, while the carpenter, who was repairing the

dak-bungalow, cursed her and her ancestry from afar. About this time the Englishman was roused to a knowledge of the business, for Gerowlia, having exhausted the string, tried to come into the veranda. She had, most unwisely, been pampered with biscuits an hour before. The carpenter stood on an outcrop of rock, and said angrily: "See what damage your *hathi* has done, Sahib." "'Tisn't my *hathi*," said the Sahib, plaintively. "You ordered it," quoth he, "and it has been here ever so long, eating up everything." He threw pieces of stone at Gerowlia, and went away. It is a terrible thing to be left alone with an unshackled elephant, even though she be a venerable spinster. Gerowlia moved round the dak-bungalow, blowing her nose in a nervous and undecided manner, and presently found some more string and thatch, which she ate. This was too much. The Englishman went out and spoke to her. She opened her mouth and salaamed; meaning thereby "biscuits." So long as she remained in this position she could do no harm.

Imagine a boundless rock-strewn plain, broken here and there by low hills, dominated by the rock of Chitor, and bisected by a single metre-gauge railway track running into the Infinite, and unrelieved by even a way-inspector's trolley. In the foreground put a brand-new dak-bungalow, furnished with a French bedstead, and nothing else; in the veranda place an embarrassed Englishman,

smiling into the open mouth of an idiotic female elephant. But Gerowlia could not live on smiles alone. Finding that no food was forthcoming, she shut her mouth, and renewed her attempts to get into the veranda, and ate more thatch. To say "Hi!" to an elephant is a misdirected courtesy. It quickens the pace, and if you flick her on the trunk with a wet towel, she curls the trunk out of harm's way. Special education is necessary. A little breechless boy passed, carrying a lump of stone. "Hit her on the feet, Sahib," said he; "hit her on the feet." Gerowlia had by this time nearly scraped off her pad, and there were no signs of the *mahout*. The Englishman went out and found a tent-peg, and returning, in the extremity of his wrath smote her bitterly on the nails of the near forefoot.

Gerowlia held up her foot to be beaten, and made the most absurd noises—squawked in fact, exactly like an old lady who has narrowly escaped being run over. She backed out of the veranda, still squawking, on three feet, and in the open held up near and off forefoot alternately to be beaten. It was very pitiful, for one swing of her trunk could have knocked the Englishman flat. He ceased whacking her, but she squawked for some minutes, and then fell placidly asleep in the sunshine. When the *mahout* returned, he beat her for breaking her tether exactly as the Englishman had done, but much more severely, and the ridiculous old thing hopped

on three legs for fully five minutes. "Come along, Sahib," said the *mahout*. "I will show this mother of bastards who is the driver. Fat daughter of the Devil, sit down. You would eat thatch, would you? How does the iron taste?" And he gave Gerowlia a headache, which affected her temper all through the afternoon. She set off, across the railway line which runs below the rock of Chitor, into broken ground cut up with *nullahs* and covered with low scrub, over which it would have been difficult to have taken a sure-footed horse, so fragmentary and disconnected was its nature.

## XI.

THE Gamberi River—clear as a trout-stream—runs through the waste round Chitor, and is spanned by an old bridge, very solid and massive, said to have been built before the sack of Ala-ud-din. The bridge is in the middle of the stream—the floods have raced round either end of it—and is reached by a steeply sloping stone causeway. From the bridge to the new town of Chitor, which lies at the foot of the hill, runs a straight and well-kept road, flanked on either side by the scattered remnants of old houses, and, here and there, fallen temples. The road, like the bridge, is no new thing, and is wide enough for twenty horsemen to ride abreast.

New Chitor is a very dirty, and apparently thriving, little town, full of grain-merchants and sellers of arms. The ways are barely wide enough for the elephant of dignity and the little brown babies of impudence. The Englishman went through, always on a slope painfully accentuated by Gerowlia who, with all possible respect to her years, must have been a baggage-animal, and no true *Sahib's* mount. Let the local Baedeker speak for a moment: "The ascent to Chitor, which begins from within the southeast angle of the town, is nearly a mile to the upper gate, with



a slope of about 1 in 15. There are two zig-zag bends, and on the three portions thus formed, are seven gates, of which one, however, has only the basement left." This is the language of fact, which, very properly, leaves out of all account the Genius of the Place who sits at the gate nearest the new city and is with the sightseer throughout. The first impression of repulsion and awe is given by a fragment of tumbled sculpture close to a red daubed *lingam*, near the Padal Pol or lowest gate. It is a piece of frieze, and the figures of the men are worn nearly smooth by time. What is visible is finely and frankly obscene to an English mind.

The road is protected on the cliff side by a thick stone wall, loopholed, for musketry, one aperture to every two feet, between fifteen and twenty feet high. This wall is being repaired throughout its length by the Maharana of Udaipur. On the hillside, among the boulders, loose stones, and *dhak-scrub*, lies stone wreckage that must have come down from the brown bastions above.

As Gerowlia labored up the stone-shod slope, the Englishman wondered how much life had flowed down this sluice of battles, and been lost at the Padal Pol—the last and lowest gate—where, in the old days the besieging armies put their best and bravest battalions. Once at the head of the lower slope, there is a clear rundown of a thousand yards with no chance of turning aside either to the right or

left. Even as he wondered, he was brought abreast of two stone chhatris, each carrying a red daubed stone. They were the graves of two very brave men, Jeemal of Bedmore, and Kalla, who fell in Akbar's sack fighting like Rajputs. Read the story of their deaths, and learn what manner of warriors they were. Their graves were all that spoke openly of the hundreds of struggles on the lower slope where the fight was always fiercest.

At last, after half an hour's climb, the main gate, the Ram Pol, was gained, and the Englishman passed into the City of Chitor and—then and there formed a resolution, since broken, not to write one word about it for fear that he should be set down as a babbling and a gushing enthusiast. Objects of archæological interest are duly described in an admirable little book of Chitor which, after one look, the Englishman abandoned. One cannot “do” Chitor with a guide-book. The Chaplain of the English Mission to Jehangir said the best that was to be said, when he described the place three hundred years ago, writing quaintly : “ Chitor, an ancient great kindgom, the chief city so called which standeth on a mighty high hill, flat on the top, walled about at the least ten English miles. There appear to this day above a hundred churches ruined and divers fair palaces which are lodged in like manner among their ruins, as many Englishmen by the observation have guessed. Its chief inhabitants to-day are Zum and Ohim,

birds and wild beasts, but the stately ruins thereof give a shadow of its beauty while it flourished in its pride." Gerowlia struck into a narrow pathway, forcing herself through garden-trees and disturbing the peacocks. An evil guide-man on the ground waved his hand, and began to speak; but was silenced. The death of Amber was as nothing to the death of Chitor—a body whence the life had been driven by riot and the sword. Men had parcelled the gardens of her palaces and the courtyards of her temples into fields; and cattle grazed among the remnants of the shattered tombs. But over all—over rent and bastion, split temple wall, pierced roof, and prone pillar—lay the "shadow of its beauty while it flourished in its pride." The Englishman walked into a stately palace of many rooms where the sunlight streamed in through wall and roof and up crazy stone stairways, held together, it seemed, by the marauding trees. In one bastion, a wind-sown peepul had wrenched a thick slab clear of the wall, but held it tight pressed in a crook of a branch, as a man holds down a fallen enemy under his elbow, shoulder, and forearm. In another place, a strange, uncanny wind sprung from nowhere, was singing all alone among the pillars of what may have been a Hall of Audience. The Englishman wandered so far in one palace that he came to an almost black-dark room, high up in a wall, and said proudly to himself: "I must be the first man who has

been here ; ” meaning no harm or insult to any one. But he tripped and fell, and as he put out his hands, he felt that the stairs had been worn hollow and smooth by the tread of innumerable naked feet. Then he was afraid, and came away very quickly, stepping delicately over fallen friezes and bits of sculptured men, so as not to offend the Dead ; and was mightily relieved when he recovered his elephant and allowed the guide to take him to Kumbha Rana’s Tower of Victory.

This stands, like all things in Chitor, among ruins, but time and the other enemies have been good to it. It is a Jain edifice, nine stories high, crowned atop—was this designed insult or undesigned repair?—with a purely Mahometan dome, where the pigeons and the bats live. Excepting this blemish, the Tower of Victory is nearly as fair as when it left the hands of the builder whose name has not been handed down to us. It is to be observed here that the first, or more ruined, Tower of Victory, built in Alluji’s days, when Chitor was comparatively young, was raised by some pious Jain as proof of conquest over things spiritual. The second tower is more worldly in intent.

Those who care to look, may find elsewhere a definition of its architecture and its more striking peculiarities. It was in kind, but not in degree, like the Jugdesh Temple at Udaipur, and, as it exceeded it in magnificence, so its effect upon the mind was more intense. The

confusing intricacy of the figures with which it was wreathed from top to bottom, the recurrence of the one calm face, the God enthroned, holding the Wheel of the Law, and the appalling lavishness of decoration, all worked toward the instilment of fear and aversion.

Surely this must have been one of the objects of the architect. The tower, in the arrangement of its stairways, is like the interior of a Chinese carved ivory puzzle-ball. The idea given is that, even while you are ascending, you are wrapping yourself deeper and deeper in the tangle of a mighty maze. Add to this the half-light, the thronging armies of sculptured figures, the mad profusion of design splashed as impartially upon the undersides of the stone window-slabs as upon the door-beam of the threshold—add, most abhorrent of all, the slippery sliminess of the walls, always worn smooth by naked men, and you will understand that the tower is not a soothing place to visit. The Englishman fancied presumptuously, that he had, in a way, grasped the builder's idea; and when he came to the top story and sat among the pigeons his theory was this: To attain power, wrote the builder of old, in sentences of fine stone, it is necessary to pass through all sorts of close-packed horrors, treacheries, battles, and insults, in darkness and without knowledge whether the road leads upward or into a hopeless *cul-de-sac*. Kumbha Rana must many times have climbed to the top story,

and looked out toward the uplands of Malwa on the one side and his own great Mewar on the other, in the days when all the rock hummed with life and the clatter of hooves upon the stony ways, and Mahmoud of Malwa was safe in hold. How he must have swelled with pride—fine insolent pride of life and rule and power—power not only to break things but to compel such builders as those who piled the tower to his royal will! There was no decoration in the top story to bewilder or amaze—nothing but well-grooved stone-slabs, and a boundless view fit for kings who traced their ancestry—

“ From times when forth from the sunlight, the first of  
our Kings came down,  
And had the earth for his footstool, and wore the  
stars for his crown.”

The builder had left no mark behind him—not even a mark on the threshold of the door, or a sign in the head of the topmost step. The Englishman looked in both places, believing that those were the places generally chosen for mark-cutting. So he sat and meditated on the beauties of kingship and the unholiness of Hindu art, and what power a shadowland of lewd monstrosities had upon those who believed in it, and what Lord Dufferin, who is the nearest approach to a king in this India, must have thought when aide-de-camps clanked after him up the narrow steps. But the day was wearing, and he came down—in both senses—and, in his descent, the carven

things on every side of the tower, and above and below, once more took hold of and perverted his fancy, so that he arrived at the bottom in a frame of mind eminently fitted for a descent into the Gau-Mukh, which is nothing more terrible than a little spring, falling into a reservoir, in the side of the hill.

He stumbled across more ruins and passed between tombs of dead Ranis, till he came to a flight of steps, built out and cut out from rock, going down as far as he could see into a growth of trees on a terrace below him. The stone of the steps had been worn and polished by the terrible naked feet till it showed its markings clearly as agate; and where the steps ended in a rock-slope, there was a visible glair, a great snail-track, upon the rocks. It was hard to keep safe footing upon the sliminess. The air was thick with the sick smell of stale incense, and grains of rice were scattered upon the steps. But there was no one to be seen. Now this in itself was not specially alarming; but the Genius of the Place must be responsible for making it so. The Englishman slipped and bumped on the rocks, and arrived, more suddenly than he desired, upon the edge of a dull blue tank, sunk between walls of timeless masonry. In a slabbed-in recess, water was pouring through a shapeless stone gargoyle, into a trough; which trough again dripped into the tank. Almost under the little trickle of water, was the loathsome Emblem of Creation, and there



were flowers and rice around it. Water was trickling from a score of places in the cut face of the hill ; oozing between the edges of the steps and welling up between the stone slabs of the terrace. Trees sprouted in the sides of the tank and hid its surroundings. It seemed as though the descent had led the Englishman, firstly, two thousand years away from his own century, and secondly, into a trap, and that he would fall off the polished stones into the stinking tank, or that the Gau-Mukh would continue to pour water until the tank rose up and swamped him, or that some of the stone slabs would fall forward and crush him flat.

Then he was conscious of remembering, with peculiar and unnecessary distinctness, that, from the Gau-Mukh, a passage led to the subterranean chambers in which the fair Pudmini and her handmaids had slain themselves. And, that Tod had written and the Station-master at Chitor had said, that some sort of devil, or ghoul, or Something, stood at the entrance of that approach. All of which was a nightmare bred in full day and folly to boot ; but it was the fault of the Genius of the Place, who made the Englishman feel that he had done a great wrong in trespassing into the very heart and soul of all Chitor. And, behind him, the Gau-Mukh guggled and choked like a man in his death-throe. The Englishman endured as long as he could—about two minutes. Then it came upon him that he



must go quickly out of this place of years and blood—must get back to the afternoon sunshine, and Gerowlia, and the dak-bungalow with the French bedstead. He desired no archæological information, he wished to take no notes, and, above all, he did not care to look behind him, where stood the reminder that he was no better than the beasts that perish. But he had to cross the smooth, worn rocks, and he felt their sliminess through his bootsoles. It was as though he were treading on the soft, oiled skin of a Hindu. As soon as the steps gave refuge, he floundered up them, and so came out of the Gau-Mukh, bedewed with that perspiration which follows alike on honest toil or—childish fear.

“This,” said he to himself, “is absurd !” and sat down on the fallen top of a temple to review the situation. But the Gau-Mukh had disappeared. He could see the dip in the ground and the beginning of the steps, but nothing more.

Perhaps it was absurd. It undoubtedly appeared so, later. Yet there was something uncanny about it all. It was not exactly a feeling of danger or pain, but an apprehension of great evil.

In defense, it may be urged that there is moral, just as much as there is mine, choke-damp. If you get into a place laden with the latter you die, and if into the home of the former you . . . behave unwisely, as constitution and temperament prompt. If any

man doubt this, let him sit for two hours in a hot sun on an elephant, stay half an hour in the Tower of Victory, and then go down into the Gau-Mukh, which, it must never be forgotten, is merely a set of springs "three or four in number, issuing from the cliff face at cow-mouth carvings, now mutilated. The water, evidently percolating from the Hathi Kund above, falls first in an old pillared hall and thence into the masonry reservoir below, eventually, when abundant enough, supplying a little waterfall lower down." That, Gentlemen and Ladies, on the honor of one who has been frightened of the dark in broad daylight, is the Gau-Mukh, as though photographed.

The Englishman regained Gerowlia and demanded to be taken away, but Gerowlia's driver went forward instead and showed him a new Mahal just built by the present Maharana. Carriage drives, however, do not consort well with Chitor and the "shadow of her ancient beauty." The return journey, past temple after temple and palace upon palace, began in the failing light, and Gerowlia was still blundering up and down narrow by-paths—for she possessed all an old woman's delusion as to the slimness of her waist when the twilight fell, and the smoke from the town below began to creep up the brown flanks of Chitor, and the jackals howled. Then the sense of desolation, which had been strong enough in all conscience in the sunshine, began to grow and grow.

Near the Ram Pol there was some semblance of a town with living people in it, and a priest sat in the middle of the road and howled aloud upon his gods, until a little boy came and laughed in his face and he went away grumbling. This touch was deeply refreshing; in the contemplation of it, the Englishman clean forgot that he had overlooked the gathering in of materials for an elaborate statistical, historical, geographical account of Chitor. All that remained to him was a shuddering reminiscence of the Gau-Mukh and two lines of the "Holy Grail,"

"And up into the sounding halls he passed,  
But nothing in the sounding halls he saw."

*Post Scriptum.*—There was something very uncanny about the Genius of the Place. He dragged an ease-loving egotist out of the French bedstead with the gilt knobs at head and foot, into a more than usually big folly—nothing less than a seeing of Chitor by moonlight. There was no possibility of getting Gerowlia out of *her* bed, and a mistrust of the Maharana's soldiery who in the daytime guarded the gates, prompted the Englishman to avoid the public way, and scramble straight up the hillside, along an attempt at a path which he had noted from Gerowlia's back. There was no one to interfere, and nothing but an infinity of pestilent nullahs and loose stones to check. Owls came out and hooted

at him, and animals ran about in the dark and made uncouth noises. It was an idiotic journey, and it ended—Oh, horror! in that unspeakable Gau-Mukh—this time entered from the opposite or brushwooded side, as far as could be made out in the dusk and from the chuckle of the water which, by night, was peculiarly malevolent.

Escaping from this place, crab-fashion, the Englishman crawled into Chitor and sat upon a flat tomb till the moon, a very inferior and second-hand one, rose, and turned the city of the dead into a city of scurrying ghouls—in sobriety, jackals. The ruins took strange shapes and shifted in the half light and cast objectionable shadows.

It was easy enough to fill the rock with the people of old times, and a very beautiful account of Chitor restored, made out by the help of Tod, and bristling with the names of the illustrious dead, would undoubtedly have been written, had not a woman, a living breathing woman, stolen out of a temple—what was she doing in that galley?—and screamed in piercing and public-spirited fashion. The Englishman got off the tomb and departed rather more noisily than a jackal; feeling for the moment that he was not much better. Somebody opened a door with a crash, and a man cried out: "Who is there?" But the cause of the disturbance was, for his sins, being most horribly scratched by some thorny scrub over the edge of the hill—there

are no bastions worth speaking of near the Gau-Mukh—and the rest was partly rolling, partly scrambling, and mainly bad language.

When you are too lucky sacrifice something, a beloved pipe for choice, to Ganesh. The Englishman has seen Chitor by moonlight—not the best moonlight truly, but the watery glare of a nearly spent moon—and his sacrifice to Luck is this. He will never try to describe what he has seen—but will keep it as a love-letter, a thing for one pair of eyes only—a memory that few men to-day can be sharers in. And does he, through this fiction, evade insulting, by pen and ink, a scene as lovely, wild, and unmatchable as any that mortal eyes have been privileged to rest upon?

An intelligent and discriminating public are perfectly at liberty to form their own opinions.

## XII.

COME away from the monstrous gloom of Chitor and escape northwards. The place is unclean and terrifying. Let us catch To-day by both hands and return to the Station-master who is also booking-parcels and telegraph-clerk, and who never seems to go to bed—and to the comfortably wadded bunks of the Rajputana-Malwa line.

While the train is running, be pleased to listen to the perfectly true story of the *bhumia* of Jhaswara, which is a story the sequel whereof has yet to be written. Once upon a time, a Rajput landholder, a *bhumia*, and a Mahometan *jaghirdar*, were next-door neighbors in Ajmir territory. They hated each other thoroughly for many reasons, all connected with land; and the *jaghirdar* was the bigger man of the two. In those days, it was the law that the victims of robbery or dacoity should be reimbursed by the owner of the lands on which the affair had taken place. The ordinance is now swept away as impracticable. There was a highway robbery on the *bhumia's* holding; and he vowed that it had been "put up" by the Mahometan who, he said, was an Ahab. The reive-gelt payable nearly ruined the Rajput, and he, laboring under a galling grievance or a groundless sus-

picion, fired the *jaghirdar's* crops, was detected and brought up before the English Judge who gave him four years' imprisonment. To the sentence was appended a recommendation that, on release, the Rajput should be put on heavy securities for good behavior. "Otherwise," wrote the Judge, who seems to have known the people he was dealing with, "he will certainly kill the *jaghirdar*." Four years passed, and the *jaghirdar* obtained wealth and consideration, and was made, let us say, a Khan Bahadur, and an Honorary Magistrate; but the *bhumia* remained in jail and thought over the highway robbery. When the day of release came, a new Judge hunted up his predecessor's finding and recommendation, and would have put the *bhumia* on security. "Sahib," said the *bhumia*, "I have no people. I have been in jail. What am I now? And who will find security for me? If you will send me back to jail again I can do nothing, and I have no friends." So they released him, and he went away into an outlying village and borrowed a sword from one house, and had it sharpened in another, for love. Two days later fell the birthday of the Khan Bahadur and the Honorary Magistrate, and his friends and servants and dependants made a little levee and did him honor after the native custom. The *bhumia* also attended the levee, but no one knew him, and he was stopped at the door of the courtyard by the servant. "Say that the *bhumia* of Jhaswara

has come to pay his salaams," said he. They let him in, and in the heart of Ajmir City, in broad daylight, and before all the *jaghirdar's* household, he smote off his enemy's head so that it rolled upon the ground. Then he fled, and though they raised the countryside against him he was never caught, and went into Bikanir.

Five years later, word came to Ajmir that Chimbo Singh, the *bhumia* of Jhaswara, had taken service under the Thakur Sahib of Palitana. The case was an old one, and the chances of identification misty, but the suspected was caught and brought in, and one of the leading native barristers of the Bombay Bar was retained to defend him. He said nothing and continued to say nothing, and the case fell through. He is believed to be "wanted" now for a fresh murder committed within the last few months, out Bikanir way.

And now that the train has reached Ajmir, the Crewe of Rajputana, whither shall a tramp turn his feet? The Englishman, set his stick on end, and it fell with its point Northwest as nearly as might be. This being translated, meant Jodhpur, which is the city of the Houyhnhnms. If you would enjoy Jodhpur thoroughly, quit at Ajmir the decent conventionalities of "station" life, and make it your business to move among gentlemen—gentlemen in the Ordnance or the Commissariat, or better still, gentlemen on the Railway. At Ajmir, gentlemen will tell you what manner



of place Jodhpur is, and their accounts, though flavored with oaths, are amusing. In their eyes the desert that rings the city has no charms, and they discuss affairs of the State, as they understand them, in a manner that would curl the hair on a Political's august head. Jodhpur has been, but things are rather better now, a much-favored camping ground for the light-cavalry of the Road—the loafers with a certain amount of brain and great assurance. The explanation is simple. There are more than four hundred horses in His Highness's city stables alone; and where the Houyhnhnm is, there also will be the Yahoo. This is sad but true.

Besides the Uhlans who come and go on Heaven knows what mysterious errands, there are bagmen traveling for the big English firms. Jodhpur is a good customer, and purchases all sorts of things, more or less useful, for the State or its friends. These are the gentlemen to know, if you would understand something of matters which are not written in reports.

The Englishman took a train from Ajmir to Marwar Junction, which is on the road to Mount Abu, westward from Ajmir, and at five in the morning, under pale moonlight, was uncartered at the beginning of the Jodhpur State Railway—one of the quaintest little lines that ever ran a locomotive. It is the Maharaja's very own, and pays about ten per cent; but its quaintness does not lie in these things.

It is worked with rude economy, and started life by singularly and completely falsifying the Government estimates for its construction. An intelligent bureau asserted that it could not be laid down for less than—but the error shall be glossed over. It was laid down for a little more than seventeen thousand rupees a mile, with the help of second-hand rails and sleepers; and it is currently asserted that the Station-masters are flagmen, pointsmen, ticket-collectors, and everything else, except platformers, and lamp-rooms. As only two trains are run in the twenty-four hours, this economy of staff does not matter. The State line, with the comparatively new branch to the Pachpadra salt-pits, pays handsomely and is exactly suited to the needs of its users. True, there is a certain haziness as to the hour of starting, but this allows laggards more time, and fills the packed carriages to overflowing.

From Marwar Junction to Jodhpur, the train leaves the Aravalis and goes northwards into the region of death that lies beyond the Luni River. Sand, *ak* bushes, and sand-hills, varied with occasional patches of unthrifty cultivation, make up the scenery. Rain has been very scarce in Marwar this year, and the country, consequently, shows at its worst, for almost every square mile of a kingdom nearly as large as Scotland is dependent on the sky for its crops. In a good season, a large village can pay from seven to nine thousand rupees revenue without blenching. In a bad

one, "all the king's horses and all the king's men" may think themselves lucky if they raise fifteen rupees from the same place. The fluctuation is startling.

From a countryside, which to the uninitiated seems about as valuable as a stretch of West African beach, the State gets a revenue of nearly forty lakhs; and men who know the country vow that it has not been one tithe exploited, and that there is more to be made from salt marble and—curious thing in this wilderness—good forest conservancy, than an open-handed Durbar dreams of. An amiable weakness for unthinkingly giving away villages where ready cash failed, has somewhat hampered the revenue in past years; but now—and for this the Maharaja deserves great credit—Jodhpur has a large and genuine surplus and a very compact little scheme of railway extension. Before turning to a consideration of the City of Jodhpur, hear a true story in connection with the Hyderabad-Pachpadra project which those interested in the scheme may lay to heart.

His State line, his "ownest own," as has been said, very much delighted the Maharaja who, in one or two points, is not unlike Sir Theodore Hope of sainted memory. Pleased with the toy, he said effusively, in words which may or may not have reached the ears of the Hyderabad-Pachpadra people: "This is a good business. If the Government will give me independent jurisdiction, I'll make

and open the line straight away from Pachpadra to the end of my dominions, *i. e.*, all but to Hyderabad."

Then "up and spake an elder knight, sat at the King's right knee," who knew something about the railway map of India and the Controlling Power of strategical lines: "Maharaja Sahib—here is the Indus Valley State line and here is the Bombay-Baroda line. Where would *you* be?" "By Jove," quoth the Maharaja, though he swore by quite another god: "I see!" and thus he abandoned the idea of a Hyderabad line, and turned his attention to an extension to Nagore, with a branch to the Makrana marble quarries which are close to the Sambhar salt lake near Jeypore. And, in the fulness of time, that extension will be made and perhaps extended to Bahawalpur.

The Englishman came to Jodhpur at mid-day, in a hot, fierce sunshine that struck back from the sands and the ledges of red rock, as though it were May instead of December. The line scorned such a thing as a regular ordained terminus. The single track gradually melted away into the sands. Close to the station was a grim stone dak-bungalow, and in the veranda stood a brisk, bag-and-flask-begirdled individual, cracking his joints with excess of irritation.

*Nota Bene.*—When one is on the road it is above all things necessary to "pass the time o' day" to fellow-wanderers. Failure to com-

ply with this law implies that the offender is "too good for his company"; and this, on the Road, is the unpardonable sin. The Englishman "passed the time o' day" in due and ample form. "Ha! Ha!" said the gentleman with the bag. "Isn't this a sweet place? There ain't no *ticca-gharies*, and there ain't nothing to eat, if you haven't brought your vittles, an' they charge you three-eight for a bottle of whisky. Oh! it's a sweet place." Here he skipped about the veranda and puffed. Then turning upon the Englishman, he said fiercely: "What have you come here for?" Now this was rude, because the ordinary form of salutation on the Road is usually, "And what are you for?" meaning "what house do you represent?" The Englishman answered dolefully that he was traveling for pleasure, which simple explanation offended the little man with the courier-bag. He snapped his joints more excruciatingly than ever: "For pleasure? My God! For pleasure? Come here an' wait five weeks for your money, an', mark what I'm tellin' you now, you don't get it then! But per'aps your ideas of pleasure is different from most people's. For pleasure! Yah!" He skipped across the sands toward the station, for he was going back with the down train, and vanished in a whirlwind of luggage and the fluttering of female skirts: in Jodhpur the women are baggage coolies. A level, drawling voice spoke from an inner room: "'E's a

bit upset. That's what 'e is! I remember when I was at Gworlior"—the rest of the story was lost, and the Englishman set to work to discover the nakedness of the dak-bungalow. For reasons which do not concern the public, it is made as bitterly uncomfortable as possible. The food is infamous, and the charges seem to be wilfully pitched about eighty per cent above the tariff, so that some portion of the bill, at least, may be paid without bloodshed, or the unseemly defilement of walls with the contents of drinking glasses. This is short-sighted policy, and it would, perhaps, be better to lower the prices and hide the tariff, and put a guard about the house to prevent jackal-molested donkeys from stampeding into the verandas. But these be details. Jodhpur dak-bungalow is a merry, merry place, and any writer in search of new ground to locate a madly improbable story in, could not do better than study it diligently. In front lies sand, riddled with innumerable ant-holes, and beyond the sand the red sandstone wall of the city, and the Mahometan burying-ground that fringes it. Fragments of sandstone set on end mark the resting places of the Faithful, who are of no great account here. Above everything, a mark for miles around, towers the dun-red pile of the Fort which is also a Palace. This is set upon sandstone rock whose sharper features have been worn smooth by the wash of the windblown sand. It is as monstrous

as anything in Doré's illustrations of the *Contes Drolatiques* and, wherever it wanders, the eye comes back at last to its fantastic bulk. There is no greenery on the rock, nothing but fierce sunlight or black shadow. A line of red hills forms the background of the city, and this is as bare as the picked bones of camels that lie bleaching on the sand below.

Wherever the eye falls, it sees a camel or a string of camels—lean, racer-built *sowarri* camels, or heavy, black, shag-haired trading ships bent on their way to the Railway Station. Through the night the air is alive with the bubbling and howling of the brutes, who assuredly must suffer from nightmare. In the morning the chorus round the station is deafening.

Knowing what these camels meant, but trusting nevertheless that the road would not be *very* bad, the Englishman went into the city, left a well-kunkered road, turned through a sand-worn, red sandstone gate, and sank ankle-deep in fine reddish white sand. This was the main thoroughfare of the city. Two tame lynxes shared it with a donkey; and the rest of the population seemed to have gone to bed. In the hot weather, between ten in the morning and four in the afternoon all Jodhpur stays at home for fear of death by sun-stroke, and it is possible that the habit extends far into what is officially called the "cold weather"; or, perhaps, being brought up among sands, men do not care to tramp



them for pleasure. The city internally is a walled and secret place; each courtyard being hidden from view by a red sandstone wall except in a few streets where the shops are poor and mean.

In an old house now used for the storing of tents, Akbar's mother lay two months, before the "Guardian of Mankind" was born, drawing breath for her flight to Umarkot across the desert. Seeing this place, the Englishman thought of many things not worth the putting down on paper, and went on till the sand grew deeper and deeper, and a great camel, heavily laden with stone, came round a corner and nearly stepped on him. As the evening fell, the city woke up, and the goats and the camels and the kine came in by hundreds, and men said that wild pig, which are strictly preserved by the Princes for their own sport, were in the habit of wandering about the roads. Now if they do this in the capital, what damage must they not do to the crops in the district? Men said that they did a very great deal of damage, and it was hard to keep their noses out of anything they took a fancy to. On the evening of the Englishman's visit, the Maharaja went out, as is his laudable custom, alone and unattended, to a road actually *in* the city along which one specially big pig was in the habit of passing. His Highness got his game with a single shot behind the shoulder, and in a few days, it was pickled and sent off to the Maharana of Udai-



pur, as a love-gift. There is great friendship between Jodhpur and Udaipur, and the idea of one King going abroad to shoot game for another has something very pretty and quaint in it.

Night fell and the Englishman became aware that the conservancy of Jodhpur might be vastly improved. Strong stench, say the doctors, are of no importance; but there came upon every breath of heated air—and in Jodhpur City the air is warm in mid-winter—the faint, sweet, sickly reek that one has always been taught to consider specially deadly. A few months ago there was an impressive outbreak of cholera in Jodhpur, and the Residency Doctor, who really hoped that the people would be brought to see sense, did his best to bring forward a general cleansing-scheme. But the city fathers would have none of it. Their fathers had been trying to poison themselves in well-defined ways for an indefinite number of years; and they were not going to have any of the Sahib's "sweeper-nonsense."

To clinch everything, one traveled member of the community rose in his place and said: "Why, I've been to Simla. Yes, to Simla! And even *I* don't want it!"

When the black dusk had shut down, the Englishman climbed up a little hill and saw the stars come out and shine over the desert. Very far away, some camel-drivers had lighted a fire and were singing as they sat by the side

of their beasts. Sound travels as far over sand as over water, and their voices came into the city wall and beat against it in multiplied echoes.

Then he returned to the House of Strange Stories—the Dak-bungalow—and passed the time o' day with a light-hearted bagman—a Cockney, in whose heart there was no thought of India, though he had traveled for years throughout the length and breadth of the Empire and over New Burma as well. There was a fort in Jodhpur, but you see that was not in his line of business exactly, and there were stables, but “you may take my word for it, them who has much to do with horses is a bad lot. You get hold of the Maharaja's coachman and he'll drive you all around the shop. I'm only waiting here collecting money.” Jodhpur dak-bungalow seems to be full of men “waiting here.” They lie in long chairs in the veranda and tell each other interminable stories, or stare citywards and express their opinion of some dilatory debtor. They are all waiting for something; and they vary the monotony of a life they make wilfully dull beyond words, by waging war with the dak-bungalow khansama. Then they return to their long chairs or their couches, and sleep. Some of them, in old days, used to wait as long as six weeks—six weeks in May, when the sixty miles from Marwar Junction to Jodhpur was covered in three days by slow-pacing bullock carts! Some of them are bagmen,

able to describe the demerits of every dakhungalow from the Peshin to Pagan, and southward to Hyderabad—men of substance who have “The Trades” at their back. It is a terrible thing to be in “The Trades,” that great Doomsday Book of Calcutta, in whose pages are written the names of doubtful clients. Let light-hearted purchasers take note.

And the others, who wait and swear and spit and exchange anecdotes—what are they? Bummers, land-sharks, skirmishers for their bread. It would be cruel in a fellow-tramp to call them loafers. Their lien upon the State may have its origin in horses, or anything else; for the State buys anything vendible, from Abdul Rahman’s most promising importations to a patent, self-acting corkscrew. They are a mixed crew, but amusing and full of strange stories of adventure by land and sea. And their ends are as curiously brutal as their lives. A wanderer was once swept into the great, still backwater that divides the loaferdom of Upper India—that is to say, Calcutta and Bombay—from the north-going current of Madras, where Nym and Pistol are highly finished articles with certificates of education. This backwater is a dangerous place to break down in, as the men on the Road know well. “You can run Rajputana in a pair o’ sack breeches an’ an old hat, but go to Central Injia with money,” says the wisdom of the Road. So the waif died in the bazaar,

and the Barrack-master Sahib gave orders for his burial. It might have been the bazaar sergeant, or it might have been an hireling who was charged with the disposal of the body. At any rate, it was an Irishman who said to the Barrack-master Sahib: "Fwhat about that loafer?" "Well, what's the matter?" "I'm considtherin whether I'm to mash in his thick head, or to break his long legs. He won't fit the store-coffin anyways."

Here the story ends. It may be an old one; but it struck the Englishman as being rather unsympathetic in its nature; and he has preserved it for this reason. Were the Englishman a mere Secretary of State instead of an enviable and unshackled vagabond, he would remodel that Philanthropic Institution of Teaching Young Subalterns how to Spell—variously called the Intelligence and the Political Department—and giving each boy the pair of sack breeches and old hat, above prescribed, would send him out for a twelve-month on the Road. Not that he might learn to swear Australian oaths (which are superior to any ones in the market) or to drink bazaar-drinks (which are very bad indeed), but in order that he might gain an insight into the tertiary politics of States—things less imposing than succession-cases and less wearisome than boundary disputes, but very well worth knowing.

A small volume might be written of the ways and the tales of Indian loafers of the more

brilliant order—such Chevaliers of the Order of Industry as would throw their glasses in your face did you call them loafers. They are a genial, blasphemous, blustering crew, and preëminent even in a land of liars.

## XIII.

THE hospitality that spreads tables in the wilderness, and shifts the stranger from the back of the hired camel into a two-horse victoria, must be experienced to be appreciated.

To those unacquainted with the peculiarities of the native-trained horse, this advice may be worth something. Sit as far back as ever you can, and, if Oriental courtesy have put an English bit and bridoon in a mouth by education intended for a spiked curb, leave the whole contraption alone. Once acquainted with the comparative smoothness of English ironmongery, your mount will grow frivolous. In which event a four pound steeplechase saddle, accepted through sheer shame, offers the very smallest amount of purchase to untrained legs.

The Englishman rode up to the Fort, and by the way learnt all these things and many more. He was provided with a racking, female horse who swept the gullies of the city by dancing sideways.

The road to the Fort, which stands on the Hill of Strife, wound in and out of sixty-foot hills, with a skilful avoidance of all shade; and this was at high noon, when puffs of heated air blew from the rocks on all sides. "What must the heat be in May?" The

Englishman's companion was a cheery Brahmin, who wore the lightest of turbans and sat the smallest of neat little countrybreds. "Awful!" said the Brahmin. "But not so bad as in the district. Look there!" and he pointed from the brow of a bad eminence, across the quivering heat-haze, to where the white sand faded into bleach blue sky and the horizon was shaken and tremulous. "It's very bad in summer. Would knock you—oh yes—all to smash, but *we* are accustomed to it." A rock-strewn hill, about half a mile, as the crow flies, from the Fort was pointed out as the place whence, at the beginning of this century, the Pretender Sowae besieged Raja Maun for five months, but could make no headway against his foe. One gun of the enemy's batteries specially galled the Fort, and the Jodhpur King offered a village to any of his gunners who should dismount it. "It was smashed," said the Brahmin. "Oh yes, all to pieces." Practically, the city which lies below the Fort is indefensible, and during the many wars of Marwar has generally been taken up by the assailants without resistance.

Entering the Fort by the Jeypore Gate, and studiously refraining from opening his umbrella, the Englishman found shadow and coolth, took off his hat to the tun-bellied, trunk-nosed God of Good-Luck who had been very kind to him in his wanderings, and sat down near half a dozen of the Maharaja's guns bearing the Mark, "A. Broome, Cossi-

pore, 1857," or "G. Hutchinson, Cossipore, 1838." Now rock and masonry are so curiously blended in this great pile that he who walks through it loses sense of being among buildings. It is as though he walked through mountain-gorges. The stone-paved, inclined planes, and the tunnel-like passages driven under a hundred feet height of buildings, increase this impression. In many places the wall and rock runs up unbroken by any window for forty feet.

It would be a week's work to pick out even roughly the names of the dead who have added to the buildings, or to describe the bewildering multiplicity of courts and ranges of rooms; and, in the end, the result would be as satisfactory as an attempt to describe a nightmare. It is said that the rock on which the Fort stands is four miles in circuit, but no man yet has dared to estimate the size of the city that they call the Palace, or the mileage of its ways. Ever since Ras Joda, four hundred years ago, listened to the voice of a *Jogi*, and leaving Mundore built his eyrie on the "Bird's nest" as the Hill of Strife was called, the Palaces have grown and thickened. Even to-day the builders are still at work. Takht Singh, the present ruler's predecessor, built royally. An incomplete bastion and a Hall of Flowers are among the works of his pleasure. Hidden away behind a mighty wing of carved red sandstone lie rooms set apart for Viceroys, Durbar Halls and dinner-rooms



without end. A gentle gloom covers the evidences of the catholic taste of the State in articles of "bigotry and virtue"; but there is enough light to show the *raison d'être* of the men who wait in the dak-bungalow. And, after all, what is the use of Royalty in these days if a man may not take delight in the pride of the eye? Kumbha Rana, the great man of Chitor, fought like a Rajput, but he had an instinct which made him build the Tower of Victory at, who knows what cost of money and life. The fighting-instinct thrown back upon itself must have some sort of outlet; and a merciful Providence wisely ordains that the Kings of the East in the nineteenth century shall take pleasure in shopping on an imperial scale. Dresden China snuff-boxes, mechanical engines, electro-plated fish-slicers, musical boxes, and gilt blown-glass Christmas tree balls do not go well with the splendors of a Palace that might have been built by Titans and colored by the morning sun. But there are excuses to be made for Kings who have no fighting to do.

In one of the higher bastions stands a curious specimen of one of the earliest *mitrailleuses*—a cumbrous machine carrying twenty gun-barrels in two rows, which small-arm fire is flanked by two tiny cannon. As a muzzle-loading implement its value after the first discharge would be insignificant; but the soldiers lounging by assured the Englishman that it had done good service in its time.

A man may spend a long hour in the upper tiers of the Palaces, but still far from the roof-tops, in looking out across the desert. There are Englishmen in these wastes, who say gravely that there is nothing so fascinating as the sand of Bikanir and Marwar. "You see," explained an enthusiast of the Hat-marked Caste, "you are not shut in by roads, and you can go just as you please. And, somehow, it grows upon you as you get used to it, and you end, y' know, by falling in love with the place." Look steadily from the Palace westward where the city with its tanks and serais is spread at your feet, and you will, in a lame way, begin to understand the fascination of the Desert which, by those who have felt it, is said to be even stronger than the fascination of the Road. The city is of red sandstone and dull and somber to look at. Beyond it, where the white sand lies, the country is dotted with camels limping into the Ewigkeit or coming from the same place. Trees appear to be strictly confined to the suburbs of the city. Very good. If you look long enough across the sands while a voice in your ear is telling you of half-buried cities, old as old Time, and wholly unvisited by Sahibs, of districts where the white man is unknown, and of the wonders of far-away Jeysulmir ruled by a half-distraught king, sand-locked and now smitten by a terrible food and water famine, you will, if it happen that you are of a sedentary and civilized na-

ture, experience a new emotion—will be conscious of a great desire to take one of the lobbing camels and get away into the desert, away from the last touch of To-day, to meet the Past face to face. Some day a novelist will exploit the unknown land from the Rann, where the wild ass breeds, northward and eastward, till he comes to the Indus.

But the officials of Marwar do not call their country a desert. On the contrary, they administer it very scientifically and raise, as has been said, about thirty-eight lakhs from it. To come back from the influence and the possible use of the desert to more prosaic facts. Read quickly a rough record of things in modern Marwar. The old is drawn in Tod, who speaks the truth. The Maharaja's right hand in the work of the State is Maharaj Sir Pertab Singh, Prime Minister A.—D.—C. to the Prince of Wales, capable of managing the Marwari who intrigues like a—Marwari, equally capable, as has been seen, of moving in London Society, and Colonel of a newly raised crack cavalry corps. The Englishmen would have liked to have seen him, but he was away in the desert somewhere, either marking a boundary or looking after a succession case. Not very long ago, as the Setts of Ajmir knew well, there was a State debt of fifty lakhs. This has now been changed into a surplus of three lakhs, and the revenue is growing. Also, the simple Dacoit who used to enjoy himself very pleasantly, has been

put into a department, and the Thug with him.

Consequently, for the department takes a genuine interest in this form of *shikar*, and the jail leg-irons are not too light, dacoities have been reduced to such an extent that men say "you may send a woman, with her ornaments upon her, from Sojat to Phalodi, and she will not lose a nose-ring." Again, and this in a Rajput State is an important matter, the boundaries of nearly every village in Marwar have been demarcated, and boundary fights, in which both sides preferred small-arm fire to the regulation club, are unknown. The open-handed system of giving away villages had raised a large and unmannerly crop of *jaghirdars*. These have been taken up and brought in hand by Sir Pertab Singh, to the better order of the State.

A Punjabi Sirdar, Har Dyal Singh, has reformed, or made rather, Courts on the Civil and Criminal Side; and his hand is said to be found in a good many sweepings out of old corners. It must always be borne in mind that everything that has been done, was carried through over and under unlimited intrigue, for Jodhpur is a native State. Intrigue must be met with intrigue by all except Gordons or demi-gods; and it is curious to hear how a reduction in tariff, or a smoothing out of some tangled Court, had to be worked by shift and byway. The tales are comic, but not for publication. Howbeit, Har Dyal

Singh got his training in part under the Punjab Government, and in part in a little Native State far away in the Himalayas, where intrigue is not altogether unknown. To the credit of the "Pauper Province" be it said, it is not easy to circumvent a Punjabi. The details of his work would be dry reading. The result of it is good, and there is justice in Marwar, and order and firmness in its administration.

Naturally, the land-revenue is the most interesting thing in Marwar from an administrative point of view. The basis of it is a tank about the size of a swimming-bath, with a catchment of several hundred square yards, draining through leaped channels. When God sends the rain, the people of the village drink from the tank. When the rains fail, as they failed this year, they take to their wells, which are brackish and breed guinea-worm. For these reasons the revenue, like the Republic of San Domingo, is never alike for two years running. There are no canal questions to harry the authorities ; but the fluctuations are enormous. Under the Aravalis the soil is good : further north they grow millet and pasture cattle, though, said a Revenue Officer cheerfully, " God knows what the brutes find to eat." *Apropos* of irrigation, the one canal deserves special mention, as showing how George Stephenson came to Jodhpur and astonished the inhabitants. Six miles from the city proper lies the Balsaman Sagar, a

great tank. In the hot weather, when the city tanks ran out or stank, it was the pleasant duty of the women to tramp twelve miles at the end of the day's work to fill their lotahs. In the hot weather Jodhpur is—let a simile suffice. Sukkur in June would be Simla to Jodhpur.

The State Engineer, who is also the Jodhpur State Line, for he has no European subordinates, conceived the idea of bringing the water from the Balsaman into the city. Was the city grateful? Not in the least. It is said that the Sahib wanted the water to run uphill and was throwing money into the tank. Being true Marwaris, men betted on the subject. The canal—a built out one, for water must not touch earth in these parts—was made at a cost of something over a lakh, and the water came down because its source was a trifle higher than the city. Now, in the hot weather, the women need not go for long walks, but the Marwari cannot understand how it was that the waters came down to Jodhpur. From the Marwari to money matters is an easy step. Formerly, that is to say, up to within a very short time, the Treasury of Jodhpur was conducted in a shiftless, happy-go-lucky sort of fashion, not uncommon in Native States, whereby the Mahajuns “held the bag” and made unholy profits on discount and other things, to the confusion of the Durbar Funds and their own enrichment. There is now a Treasury modeled on English lines, and English in the important particular that money

is not to be got from it for the asking, and the items of expenditure are strictly looked after.

In the middle of all this bustle of reform planned, achieved, frustrated, and replanned, and the never-ending underground warfare that surges in a Native State, move the English officers—the irreducible minimum of exiles. As a caste, the working Englishmen in Native States are curiously interesting; and the traveler whose tact by this time has been blunted by tramping, sits in judgment upon them as he has seen them. In the first place, they are, they must be, the fittest who have survived; for though, here and there, you shall find one chafing bitterly against the burden of his life in the wilderness, one to be pitied more than any chained beast, the bulk of the caste are honestly and unaffectedly fond of their work, fond of the country around them, and fond of the people they deal with. In each State their answer to a question is the same. The men with whom they are in contact are “all right” when you know them, but you’ve got to “know them first,” as the music-hall song says. Their hands are full of work; so full that, when the incult wanderer said: “What do you find to do?” they look upon him with contempt and amazement, exactly as the wanderer himself had once looked upon a Globe-trotter, who had put to him the same impertinent query. And—but here the Englishman may be wrong—it seemed to him that in one respect their lives were a good



deal more restful and concentrated than those of their brethren under the British Government. There was no talk of shiftings and transfers and promotions, stretching across a Province and a half, and no man said anything about Simla. To one who has hitherto believed that Simla is the hub of the Empire, it is disconcerting to hear: "Oh, Simla! That's where you Bengalis go. We haven't anything to do with Simla down here." And no more they have. Their talk and their interests run in the boundaries of the States they serve, and, most striking of all, the gossip element seems to be cut altogether. It is a backwater of the river of Anglo-Indian life—or is it the main current, the broad stream that supplies the motive power, and is the other life only the noisy ripple on the surface? You who have lived, not merely looked at, both lives, decide. Much can be learned from the talk of the caste, many curious, many amusing, and some startling things. One hears stories of men who take a poor, impoverished State as a man takes a wife, "for better or worse," and, moved by some incomprehensible ideal of virtue, consecrate—that is not too big a word—consecrate their lives to that State in all single-heartedness and purity. Such men are few, but they exist to-day, and their names are great in lands where no Englishman travels. Again the listener hears tales of grizzled diplomats of Rajputana—Machiavellis who have hoisted a powerful



intriguer with his own intrigue, and bested priestly cunning, and the guile of the Oswal, simply that the way might be clear for some scheme which should put money into a tottering Treasury, or lighten the taxation of a few hundred thousand men—or both ; for this can be done. One tithe of that force spent on their own personal advancement would have carried such men very far.

Truly the Hat-marked Caste are a strange people. They are so few and so lonely and so strong. They can sit down in one place for years, and see the works of their hands and the promptings of their brain grow to actual and beneficent life, bringing good to thousands. Less fettered than the direct servant of the Indian Government, and working over a much vaster charge, they seem a bigger and a more large-minded breed. And that is saying a good deal.

But let the others, the little people bound down and supervised, and strictly limited and income-taxed, always remember that the Hat-marked are very badly off for shops. If they want a neck-tie they must get it up from Bombay, and in the Rains they can hardly move about ; and they have no amusements and must go a day's railway journey for a rubber, and their drinking-water is doubtful : and there is less than one white woman *per* ten thousand square miles.

After all, comparative civilization has its advantages.

## XIV.

JODHPUR differs from the other States of Rajputana in that its Royalty are peculiarly accessible to an inquiring public. There are wanderers, the desire of whose life it is "to see Nabobs," which is the Globe-trotter's title for any one in unusually clean clothes, or an Oudh Taluqdar in gala dress. Men asked in Jodhpur whether the Englishman would like to see His Highness. The Englishman had a great desire to do so if his Highness would be in no way inconvenienced. Then they scoffed: "Oh, he won't *darbar* you, you needn't flatter yourself. If he's in the humor he'll receive you like an English country-gentleman." How in the world could the owner of such a place as Jodhpur Palace be in any way like an English country-gentleman? The Englishman had not long to wait in doubt. His Highness intimated his readiness to see the Englishman between eight and nine in the morning at the Raika-Bagh. The Raika-Bagh is not a Palace, for the lower story and all the detached buildings round it are filled with horses. Nor can it in any way be called a stable, because the upper story contains sumptuous apartments full of all manner of valuables both of the East and the West. Nor is it in any sense a pleasure-garden,

for it stands on soft white sand, close to a multitude of litter and sand training tracks, and is devoid of trees for the most part. Therefore the Raika-Bagh is simply the Raika-Bagh and nothing else. It is now the chosen residence of the Maharaja who loves to live among his four hundred or more horses. All Jodhpur is horse-mad by the way, and it behoves any one who wishes to be any one to keep his own race-course. The Englishman went to the Raika-Bagh, which stands half a mile or so from the city, and passing through a long room filled with saddles by the dozen, bridles by the score, and bits by the hundred, was aware of a very small and lively little cherub on the roof of a garden-house. He was carefully muffled, for the morning was chill. "Good morning," he cried cheerfully in English, waving a mittened hand. "Are you going to see my faver and the horses?" It was the Maharaja Kanwar, the Crown Prince, the apple of the Maharaja's eye, and one of the quaintest little bodies that ever set an Englishmen disrespectfully laughing. He studies English daily with one of the English officials of the State, and stands a very good chance of being thoroughly spoiled, for he is a general pet. As befits his dignity, he has his own carriage or carriages, his own twelve-hand stable, his own house and retinue.

A few steps further on, in a little enclosure in front of a small two-storied white bungalow, sat His Highness the Maharaja, deep in

discussion with the State Engineer. He wore an English ulster, and within ten paces of him was the first of a long range of stalls. There was an informality of procedure about Jodhpur which, after the strained etiquette of other States, was very refreshing. The State Engineer, who has a growing line to attend to, cantered away and His Highness after a few introductory words, knowing what the Englishman would be after, said: "Come along, and look at the horses." Other formality there was absolutely none. Even the indispensable knot of hangers-on stood at a distance, and behind a paling, in this most rustic country residence. A well-bred fox-terrier took command of the proceedings, after the manner of dogs the world over, and the Maharaja led to the horse-boxes. But a man turned up, bending under the weight of much bacon. "Oh! here's the pig I shot for Udaipur last night. You see that is the best piece. It's pickled, and that's what makes it yellow to look at." He patted the great side that was held up. "There will be a camel sowar to meet it half way to Udaipur; and I hope Udaipur will be pleased with it. It was a very big pig." "And where did you shoot it, Maharaja Sahib?" "Here," said His Highness, smiting himself high up under the armpit. "Where else would you have it?" Certainly this descendant of Raja Maun was more like an English country-gentleman than the Englishman in his ignorance had deemed

possible. He led on from horse-box to horse-box, the terrier at his heels, pointing out each horse of note; and Jodhpur has many. "There's *Raja*, twice winner of the Civil Service Cup." The Englishman looked reverently and *Raja* rewarded his curiosity with a vicious snap, for he was being dressed over, and his temper was out of joint. Close to him stood *Autocrat*, the gray with the nutmeg marks on the off-shoulder, a picture of a horse, also disturbed in his mind. Next to him was a chestnut Arab, a hopeless cripple, for one of his knees had been smashed and the leg was doubled up under him. It was *Turquoise*, who, six or eight years ago, rewarded good feeding by getting away from his groom, falling down and ruining himself, but who, none the less, has lived an honored pensioner on the Maharaja's bounty ever since. No horses are shot in the Jodhpur stables, and when one dies—they have lost not more than twenty-five in six years—his funeral is an event. He is wrapped in a white sheet which is strewn with flowers, and, amid the weeping of the *saises*, is borne away to the burial ground.

After doing the honors for nearly half an hour the Maharaja departed, and as the Englishman has not seen more than forty horses, he felt justified in demanding more. And he got them. *Eclipse* and *Young Revenge* were out down-country, but *Sherwood* at the stud, *Shere Ali*, *Conqueror*, *Tynedale*, *Sherwood II*,

a maiden of Abdul Rahman's, and many others of note, were in, and were brought out. Among the veterans, a wrathful, rampant, red horse still, came *Brian Boru*, whose name has been written large in the chronicles of the Indian turf, jerking his *sais* across the road. His near-fore is altogether gone, but as a pensioner he condescends to go in harness, and is then said to be a "handful." He certainly looks it.

At the two hundred and fifty-seventh horse, and perhaps the twentieth block of stables, the Englishman's brain began to reel, and he demanded rest and information on a certain point. He had gone into some fifty stalls, and looked into all the rest, and in the looking had searchingly sniffed. But, as truly as he was then standing far below *Brian Boru's* bony withers, never the ghost of a stench had polluted the keen morning air. The City of the Houyhnhnms was specklessly clean—cleaner than any stable, racing or private, that he had been into. How was it done? The pure white sand accounted for a good deal, and the rest was explained by one of the Masters of Horse: "Each horse has one *sais* at least—old *Ringwood* has four—and we make 'em work. If we didn't, we'd be mucked up to the horses' bellies in no time. Everything is cleaned off at once; and whenever the sand's tainted it's renewed. There's quite enough sand, you see, hereabouts. Of course we can't keep their coats so good as in other

stables, by reason of the rolling ; but we can keep 'em pretty clean."

To the eye of one who knew less than nothing about horse-flesh, this immaculate purity was very striking, and quite as impressive was the condition of the horses, which was English—quite English. Naturally, none of them were in any sort of training beyond daily exercise, but they were fit and in such thoroughly good fettle. Many of them were out on the various tracks, and many were coming in. Roughly, two hundred go out of a morning, and, it is to be feared, learn from the heavy going of the Jodhpur courses how to hang in their stride. This is a matter for those who know, but it struck the Englishman that a good deal of the unsatisfactory performances of the Jodhpur stables might be accounted for by their having lost their clean stride on the sand, and having to pick it up gradually on the less holding down-country courses—unfortunately when they were *not* doing training gallops, but the real thing.

It was pleasant to sit down and watch the rush of the horses through the great opening—gates are not affected—going on to the countryside where they take the air. Here a boisterous, unschooled Arab shot out across the road and cried, "Ha ! Ha !" in the scriptural manner before trying to rid himself of the grinning black imp on his back. Behind him a Cabuli—surely all Cabulis must have been born with Pelhams in their mouths—bored sulkily



across the road, or threw himself across the path of a tall, mild-eyed Kurnal-bred youngster, whose cocked ears and swinging head showed that, though he was so sedate, he was thoroughly taking in his surroundings, and would very much like to know if there were anybody better than himself on the course that morning. Impetuous as a schoolboy and irresponsible as a monkey, one of the Prince's polo ponies, not above racing in his own set, would answer the question by rioting past the pupil of Parrot, the monogram on his bodycloth flapping free in the wind, and his head and hogged tail in the elements. The youngster would swing himself round, and polka-mazurka for a few paces, till his attention would be caught by some dainty Child of the Desert, fresh from the Bombay stables, sweating at every sound, backing and filling like a rudderless ship. Then, thanking his stars that he was wiser than some people, Number 177 would lob on to the track and settle down to his spin like the gentleman he was. Elsewhere, the eye fell upon a cloud of nameless ones, purchases from Abdul Rahman, whose worth will be proved next hot weather, when they are seriously taken in hand—skirmishing over the face of the land and enjoying themselves immensely. High above everything else, like a collier among barges, screaming shrilly, a black, flamboyant Marwari stallion, with a crest like the crest of a barb, barrel-bellied, goose-rumped, and river-maned, pranced



through the press, while the slow-pacing waler carriage-horses eyed him with deep disfavor, and the Maharaja Kanwar's tiny mount capered under his pink, Roman nose, kicking up as much dust as the *Foxhall* colt who had got on to a lovely patch of sand and was dancing a saraband in it. In and out of the tangle, going down to or coming back from the courses, ran, shuffled, rocketed, plunged, sulked, or stampeded countless horses of all kinds, shapes, and descriptions—so that the eye at last failed to see what they were, and only retained a general impression of a whirl of bays, grays, iron grays, and chestnuts with white stockings, some as good as could be desired, others average, but not one distinctly bad.

“We have no downright bad 'uns in this stable. What's the use?” said the Master of Horse, calmly. “They are all good beasts and, one with another, must cost more than a thousand rupees each. This year's new ones bought from Bombay and the pick of our own studs are a hundred strong about. May be more. Yes, they look all right enough; but you can never know what they are going to turn out. Live-stock is very uncertain.” “And how are the stables managed? how do you make room for the fresh stock?” Something this way. Here are all the new ones and Parrott's lot, and the English colts that Maharaja Pertab Singh brought out with him from Home. *Winterlake* out o' *Queen's Con*

*sort* that chestnut is with the two white stockings you're looking at now. Well, next hot weather we shall see what they're made of and which is who. There's so many that the trainer hardly knows 'em one from another till they begin to be a good deal forward. Those that haven't got the pace, or that the Maharaja don't fancy, they're taken out and sold for what they'll bring. The man who takes the horses out has a good job of it. He comes back and says: "I sold such and such for so much, and here's the money." That's all. Well, our rejections are worth having. They have taken prizes at the Poona Horse Show. See for yourself. Is there one of those that you wouldn't be glad to take for a hack, and look well after too? Only they're no use to us, and so out they go by the score. We've got sixty riding-boys, perhaps more, and they've got their work cut out to keep them all going. What you've seen are only the stables. We've got one stud at Bellara eighty miles out, and they come in sometimes in droves of three and four hundred from the stud. They raise Marwaris there too, but that's entirely under native management. We've got nothing to do with that. The natives reckon a Marwari the best country-bred you can lay hands on; and some of them are beauties! Crests on 'em like the top of a wave. Well, there's that stud and another stud and, reckoning one with another, I should say the Maharaja has nearer twelve hundred than a

thousand horses of his own. For this place here, two wagon-loads of grass come in every day from Marwar Junction. Lord knows how many saddles and bridles we've got. I never counted. I suppose we've about forty carriages, not counting the ones that get shabby and are stacked in places in the city, as I suppose you've seen. We take 'em out in the morning, a regular string altogether, brakes and all; but the prettiest turn-out we ever turned out was Lady Dufferin's pony four-in-hand. Walers—thirteen-two the wheelers, I think, and thirteen-one the leaders. They took prizes in Poona. That *was* a pretty turn-out. The prettiest in India. Lady Dufferin, she drove it when the Viceroy was down here last year. There are bicycles and tricycles in the carriage department too. I don't know how many but when the Viceroy's camp was held, there was about one apiece for the gentlemen, with remounts. They're somewhere about the place now, if you want to see them. How do we manage to keep the horses so quiet? You'll find some o' the youngsters play the goat a good deal when they come out o' stable, but, as you say, there's no vice generally. It's this way. We don't allow any curry-combs. If we did, the *saises* would be wearing out their brushes on the combs. It's all elbow-grease here. They've got to go over the horses with their hands. They must handle 'em, and a native he's afraid of a horse. Now an English groom, when a horse is doing the fool,

clips him over the head with a curry-comb, or punches him in the belly; and that hurts the horse's feelings. A native, he just stands back till the trouble is over. He *must* handle the horse or he'd get into trouble for not dressing him, so it comes to all handling and no licking, and that's why you won't get hold of a really vicious brute in these stables. Old *Ringwood* he had four *saises*, and he wanted 'em every one, but the other horses have no more than one *sais* apiece. The Maharaja he keeps fourteen or fifteen horses for his own riding. Not that he cares to ride now, but he likes to have his horses; and no one else can touch 'em. Then there's the horses that he mounts his visitors on, when they come for pig-sticking and such like, and then there's a lot of horses that go to Maharaja Pertab Singh's new cavalry regiment. So you see a horse can go through all three degrees sometimes before he gets sold, and be a good horse at the end of it. And I think that's about all!"

A cloud of youngsters, sweating freely and ready for any mischief, shot past on their way to breakfast, and the conversation ended in a cloud of sand and the drumming of hurrying hooves.

In the Raika-Bagh are more racing cups than this memory holds the names of. Chiefest of all was the Delhi Assemblage Cup—the Imperial Vase, of solid gold, won by *Crown Prince*. The other pieces of plate

were not so imposing. But of all the Crown Jewels, the most valuable appeared at the end of the inspection. It was the small Maharaja Kanwar lolling in state in a huge barouche—his toes were at least two feet off the floor—that was taking him from his morning drive. “Have you seen *my* horses?” said the Maharaja Kanwar. The four twelve-hand ponies had been duly looked over, and the future ruler of Jodhpur departed satisfied.

## XV.

"A TWENTY-FIVE per cent. reduction all roun' an' no certain leave when you wants it. *Of* course the best men goes somewhere else. That's only natural, and 'ere's this sanguinary down mail a-stickin' in the eye of the Khundwa down! I tell you, Sir, Injia's a bad place—a very bad place. 'Tisn't what it was when I came out one and thirty year ago, an' the drivers was getting their seven and eight 'undred rupees a month an' was treated as *men*."

The Englishman was on his way to Nasirabad, and a gentleman in the Railway was explaining to him the real reason of the decadence of the Empire. It was because the Rajputana-Malwa Railway had cut all its employés twenty-five per cent. It is ungenerous to judge a caste by a few samples; but the Englishman had on the Road and elsewhere seen a good deal of gentlemen on the Railway, and they spend their pay in a manner that would do credit to an income of a thousand a month. Now they say that the twenty-five per cent. reduction deprives them of all the pleasures of life. So much the better if it makes them moderately economical in their expenditure. Revolving these things in his mind, together with one or two stories of extravagances not quite fit for publication,

the Englishman came to Nasirabad, before sunrise, and there to an evil-looking tonga. Quoth Ram Baksh, proprietor, driver, *sais*, and everything else, calmly: "At this time of the year and having regard to the heat of the sun who wants a top to a tonga? I have no top. I have a top, but it would take till twelve o'clock to put it on. And behold, Sahib, Padre Martum Sahib went in this tonga to Deoli. All the Officer Sahibs of Deoli and Nasirabad go in this tonga for *shikar*. This is a 'shutin-tonga'!" "When Church and Army are brought against one, argument is in vain." But to take a soft, office-bred unfortunate into the wilderness, upon a skeleton, a diagram of a conveyance, is brutality. Ram Baksh did not see it, and headed his two thirteen-hand rats straight towards the morning sun, along a beautiful military road. "We shall get to Deoli in six hours," said Ram Baksh the boastful, and, even as he spoke, the spring of the tonga bar snapt "mit a harp-like melodious twang." "What does it matter?" said Ram Baksh. "Has the Sahib never seen a tonga-iron break before? Padre Martum Sahib and all the Officer Sahibs in Deoli—" "Ram Baksh," said the Englishman, sternly, "I am not a Padre Sahib nor an Officer Sahib, and if you say anything more about Padre Martum Sahib or the officer in Deoli I shall grow very angry, Ram Baksh."

"Humph," said Ram Baksh, "I knew you

were not a Padre Sahib." The little mishap was patched up with string, and the tonga went on merrily. It is Stevenson who says that the "invitation to the road," nature's great morning song, has not yet been properly understood or put to music. The first note of it is the sound of the dawn-wind through long grass. It is good, good beyond expression, to see the sun rise upon a strange land and to know that you have only to go forward and possess that land—that it will dower you before the day is ended with a hundred new impressions, and, perhaps, one idea. It is good to snuff the wind when it comes in over large uplands or down from the tops of the blue Aravalis—dry and keen as a new-ground sword. Best of all is to light the First Pipe—is there any tobacco so good as that we burn in honor of the breaking day?—and, while the ponies wake the long white road with their hooves and the birds go abroad in companions together, to thank your stars that you are neither the Subaltern who has Orderly Room, the 'Stunt who has office, or the Judge who has the Court to attend; but are only a loafer in a flannel shirt bound, if God pleases, to "little Boondi," somewhere beyond the faint hills beyond the plain.

But there was alloy in this delight. Men had told the Englishman darkly that Boondi State had no love for Englishmen, that there was nowhere to stop, and that no one would do anything for money. Love was out of the



question. Further, it was an acknowledged fact that there were no Englishmen of any kind in Boondi. But the Englishman trusted that Ganesh would be good to him, and that he would, somehow or other, fall upon his feet as he had fallen before. The road from Nasirabad to Deoli, being military in its nature, is nearly as straight as a ruler and about as smooth. Here and there little rocky hills, the last off-shoots of the Aravalis to the west, break the ground ; but the bulk of it is fair and without pimples. The Deoli Force are apparently so utterly Irregular that they can do without a telegraph, have their mails carried by runners, and dispense with bridges over all the fifty-six miles that separate them from Nasirabad. However, a man who goes shikarring for any length of time in one of Ram Baksh's tongas would soon learn to dispense with anything and everything. " *All* the Sahibs use my tonga ; I've got eight of them and twenty pairs of horses," said Ram Baksh. " They go as far as Gangra, where the tigers are, for they are ' shutin-tongas.' " Now the Englishman knew Gangra slightly, having seen it on the way to Udaipur ; and it was as perverse and rocky a place as any man would desire to see. He politely expressed doubt. " I tell you my tongas go anywhere," said Ram Baksh, testily. A hay-wagon—they cut and stack their hay in these parts—blocked the road. Ram Baksh ran the tonga to one side, into a rut, fetched up on a tree-

stump, rebounded on to a rock, and struck the road again. "Observe," said Ram Baksh; "but that is nothing. You wait till we get on the Boondi road, and I'll make you shake, shake like a bottle." "Is it *very* bad?" "I've never been to Boondi myself, but I hear it is all rocks—great rocks as big as this tonga." But though he boasted himself and his horses nearly all the way, he could not reach Deoli in anything like the time he had set forth. "If I am not at Boondi by four," he had said, at six in the morning, "let me go without my fee." But by midday he was still far from Deoli, and Boondi lay twenty-eight miles beyond that station. "What can I do?" said he. "I've laid out lots of horses—any amount. But the fact is I've never been to Boondi. I shan't go there in the night." Ram Baksh's "lots of horses" were three pair between Nasirabad and Deoli—three pair of undersized ponies who did wonders. At one place, after he had quitted a cotton wagon, a drove of gipsies, and a man on horseback, with his carbine across his saddle-bow, the Englishman came to a stretch of road so utterly desolate that he said: "Now I am clear of everybody who ever knew me. This is the beginning of the waste into which the scape-goat was sent."

From a bush by the roadside sprang up a fat man who cried aloud in English: "How does Your Honor do? I met Your Honor in Simla this year. Are you quite well?"

Ya-as, I am here. Your Honor remembers me? I am traveling. Ya-as. Ha! Ha!" and he went on, leaving His Honor bemazed. It was a Babu—a Simla Babu, of that there could be no doubt; but who he was or what he was doing, thirty miles from anywhere, His Honor could not make out. The native moves about more than most folk, except railway people, imagine. The big banking firms of Upper India naturally keep in close touch with their great change-houses in Ajmir, despatching and receiving messengers regularly. So it comes to pass that the necessitous circumstances of Lieutenant Rannamack, of the Tyneside Tailtwisters, quartered on the Frontier, are thoroughly known and discussed, a thousand miles south of the cantonment where the light-hearted Lieutenant goes to his money-lender.

This is by the way. Let us return to the banks of the Banas river, where "poor Carey," as Tod calls him, came when he was sickening for his last illness. The Banas is one of those streams which runs "over golden sands with feet of silver," but, from the scarp of its banks, Deoli in the rains must be isolated. Ram Baksh, questioned hereon, vowed that all the Officer Sahibs never dreamed of halting, but went over in boats or on elephants. According to Ram Baksh the men of Deoli must be wonderful creatures. They do nothing but use his tongas. A break in some low hills gives on to the dead

flat plain in which Deoli stands. "You must stop here for the night," said Ram Baksh. "I will *not* take my horses forward in the dark; God knows where the dak-bungalow is. I've forgotten, but any one of the Officer Sahibs in Deoli will tell you."

Those in search of a new emotion would do well to run about an apparently empty cantonment, in a disgraceful shooting-tonga, hunting for a place to sleep in. Chaprassis come out of back verandas, and are rude, and regimental Babus hop off godowns, and are flippant, while in the distance a Sahib looks out of his room, and eyes the dusty forlorn-hope with silent contempt. It should be mentioned that the dust on the Deoli Road not only powders but masks the face and raiment of the passenger.

Next morning Ram Baksh was awake with the dawn, and clamorous to go on to Boondi. "I've sent a pair of horses, big horses, out there and the *sais* is a fool. Perhaps they will be lost; I want to find them." He dragged his unhappy passenger on the road once more and demanded of all who passed the dak-bungalow which was the way to Boondi. "Observe," said he, "there can be only one road, and if I hit it we are all right, and I'll show you what the tonga can do." "Amen," said the Englishman, devoutly, as the tonga jumped into and out of a larger hole. "Without doubt this is the Boordi Road," said Ram Baksh; "it is so bad."

It has been before said that the Boondi State has no great love for Sahibs. The state of the road proves it. "This," said Ram Baksh, tapping the wheel to see whether the last plunge had smashed a spoke, "is a very good road. You wait till you see what is ahead." And the funeral staggered on—over irrigation cuts, through buffalo wallows, and dried pools stamped with the hundred feet of kine (this, by the way, is the most cruel road of all), up rough banks where the rock ledges peered out of the dust, down steep-cut dips ornamented with large stones, and along two-feet deep ruts of the rains, where the tonga went slantwise even to the verge of upsetting. It was a royal road—a native road—a Raj road of the roughest, and, through all its jolts and bangs and bumps and dips and heaves, the eye of Ram Baksh rolled in its blood-shot socket, seeking for the "big horses" he had so rashly sent into the wilderness. The ponies that had done the last twenty miles into Deoli were nearly used up, and did their best to lie down in the dry beds of nullahs.

A man came by on horseback, his servant walking before with platter and meal-bag. "Have you seen any horses hereabouts?" cried Ram Baksh. "Horses? What the Devil have I to do with your horses? D'you think I've stolen them?" Now this was decidedly a strange answer, and showed the rudeness of the land. An old woman under a tree cried out in a strange tongue and

ran away. It was a dreamlike experience, this hunting for horses in a wilderness with neither house nor hut nor shed in sight. "If we keep to the road long enough we must find them. Look at the road. This Raj ought to be smitten with bullets." Ram Baksh had been pitched forward nearly on the off-pony's rump, and was in a very bad temper indeed. The funeral found a house—a house walled with thorns—and near by were two big horses, thirteen-two if an inch, and harnessed quite regardless of expense.

Everything was repacked and rebound with triple ropes, and the Sahib was provided with an extra cushion ; but he had reached a sort of dreamsome Nirvana, having several times bitten his tongue through, cut his boot against the wheel-edge, and twisted his legs into a true-lovers'-knot. There was no further sense of suffering in him. He was even beginning to enjoy himself faintly and by gasps. The road struck boldly into hills with all their teeth on edge, that is to say, their strata breaking across the road in little ripples. The effect of this was amazing. The tonga skipped merrily as a young fawn, from ridge to ridge. It shivered, it palpitated, it shook, it slid, it hopped, it waltzed, it ricocheted, it bounded like a kangaroo, it blundered like a sledge, it swayed like a top-heavy coach on a down-grade, it "kicked" like a badly coupled railway carriage, it squelched like a country-cart, it squeaked in its torment,

and lastly, it essayed to plow up the ground with its nose. After three hours of this performance, it struck a tiny little ford, set between steeply sloping banks of white dust, where the water was clear brown and full of fish. And here a blissful halt was called under the shadow of the high bank of a tobacco field.

Would you taste one of the real pleasures of Life? Go through severe acrobatic exercises in and about a tonga for four hours; then, having eaten and drank till you can no more, sprawl in the cool of a nullah bed with your head among the green tobacco, and your mind adrift with the one little cloud in a royally blue sky. Earth has nothing more to offer her children than this deep delight of animal well-being. There were butterflies in the tobacco—six different kinds, and a little rat came out and drank at the ford. To him succeeded the flight into Egypt. The white banks of the ford framed the picture perfectly—the Mother in blue, on a great white donkey holding the Child in her arms, and Joseph walking beside, his hand upon the donkey's withers. By all the laws of the East, Joseph should have been riding and the Mother walking. This was an exception decreed for the Englishman's special benefit. It was very warm and very pleasant, and, somehow, the passers by the ford grew indistinct, and the nullah became a big English garden, with a cuckoo singing far down in the orchard,



among the apple-blossoms. The cuckoo started the dream. He was the only real thing in it, for on waking the garden slipped back into the water, but the cuckoo remained and called and called for all the world as though he had been a veritable English cuckoo. "Cuckoo—cuckoo—cuck"; then a pause and renewal of the cry from another quarter of the horizon. After that the ford became distasteful, so the procession was driven forward and in time plunged into what must have been a big city once, but the only inhabitants were oilmen. There were abundance of tombs here, and one carried a lifelike carving in high relief of a man on horseback spearing a foot-soldier. Hard by this place the road or rut turned by great gardens, very cool and pleasant, full of tombs and black-faced monkeys who quarreled among the tombs, and shut in from the sun by gigantic banians and mango trees. Under the trees and behind the walls, priests sat singing; and the Englishman would have inquired into what strange place he had fallen, but the men did not understand him.

Ganesh is a mean little God of circumscribed powers. He was dreaming, with a red and flushed face, under a banian tree; and the Englishman gave him four annas to arrange matters comfortably at Boondi. His priest took the four annas, but Ganesh did nothing whatever, as shall be shown later. His only excuse is that his trunk was a good deal worn, and he would have been better for



some more silver leaf, but that was no fault of the Englishman.

Beyond the dead city was a jhil, full of snipe and duck, winding in and out of the hills; and beyond the jhil, hidden altogether among the hills, was Boondi. The nearer to the city the viler grew the road and the more overwhelming the curiosity of the inhabitants. But what befel at Boondi must be reserved for another chapter.

## XVI.

It is high time that a new treaty were made with Maha Rao Raja Ram Singh, Bahadur, Raja of Boondi. He keeps the third article of the old one too faithfully, which says that he "shall not enter into negotiations with any one without the consent of the British Government." He does not negotiate at all. Arrived at Boondi Gate, the Englishman asked where he might lay his head for the night, and the Quarter Guard with one accord said: "The Sukh Mahal, which is beyond the city," and the tonga went thither through the length of the town till it arrived at a pavilion on a lake—a place of two turrets connected by an open colonnade. The "house" was open to the winds of heaven and the pigeons of the Raj; but the latter had polluted more than the first could purify. A snowy-bearded *chowkidar* crawled out of a place of tombs, which he seemed to share with some monkeys, and threw himself into Anglo-Saxon attitudes. He was a great deal worse than Ranı Baksh, for he said that all the Officer Sahibs of Deoli came to the Sukh Mahal for *shikar* and—never went away again, so pleased were they. The Sahib had brought the Honor of his Presence, and he was a very old man, and without a written permit could do nothing.

Then he fell deeply asleep without warning; and there was a pause, of one hour only, which the Englishman spent in seeing the lake. It, like the jhils on the road, wound in and out among the hills, and, on the bund side, was bounded by a hill of black rock crowned with a *chhatri* of gray stone. Below the bund was a garden as fair as eye could wish, and the shores of the lake were dotted with little temples. Given a habitable house,—a mere dakhbungalow,—it would be a delightful spot to rest in. Warned by some bitter experiences in the past, the Englishman knew that he was in for the demi-semi-royal or embarrassing reception, when a man, being the unwelcome guest of a paternal State, is neither allowed to pay his way and make himself comfortable, nor is he willingly entertained. When he saw a one-eyed *munshi* (clerk), he felt certain that Ganesh had turned upon him at last. The *munshi* demanded and received the *purwana*, or written permit. Then he sat down and questioned the traveler exhaustively as to his character and profession. Having thoroughly satisfied himself that the visitor was in no way connected with the Government or the “Agenty Sahib Bahadur,” he took no further thought of the matter and the day began to draw in upon a grassy bund, an open-work pavilion, and a disconsolate tonga.

At last the faithful servitor, who had helped to fight the Battle of the Mail Bags at Udaipur, broke his silence, and vowing that all these

devil-people—not more than twelve—had only come to see the fun, suggested the breaking of the *munshi's* head. And, indeed, that seemed the best way of breaking the ice; for the *munshi* had, in the politest possible language, put forward the suggestion that there was nothing particular to show that the Sahib who held the *purwana* had really any right to hold it. The *chowkidar* woke up and chanted a weird chant, accompanied by the Anglo-Saxon attitudes, a new set. He was an old man, and all the Sahib-log said so, and within the pavilion were tables and chairs and lamps and bath-tubs, and everything that the heart of man could desire. Even now an enormous staff of menials were arranging all these things for the comfort of the Sahib Bahadur and Protector of the Poor, who had brought the honor and glory of his Presence all the way from Deoli. What did tables and chairs and eggs and fowls and very bright lamps matter to the Raj? He was an old man and . . . “Who put the present Raja on the throne?” “Lake Sahib,” promptly answered the *chowkidar*. “I was there. That is the news of many old years.” Now Tod says it was he himself who installed “Lalji the beloved” in the year 1821. The Englishman began to lose faith in the *chowkidar*. The *munshi* said nothing but followed the Englishman with his one workable eye. A merry little breeze crisped the waters of the lake, and the fish began to frolic before going to bed.


“Is nobody going to do or bring anything?” said the Englishman, faintly, wondering whether the local jail would give him a bed if he killed the *munshi*. “I am an old man,” said the *chowkidar* and because of their great respect and reverence for the Sahib in whose Presence I am only a bearer of orders and a servant awaiting them, men, many men, are bringing now tent-flies which I with my own hands will wrap, here and there, there and here, in and about the pillars of the place; and thus you, O Sahib, who have brought the honor of your Presence to the Boondi Raj over the road to Deoli, which is a *kutch*a road, will be provided with a very fine and large apartment over which I will watch while you go to kill the tigers in these hills.

By this time two youths had twisted *canvas* round some of the pillars of the colonnade, making a sort of loose-box with a two-foot air-way all round the top. There was no door, but there were unlimited windows. Into this enclosure the *chowkadir* heaped furniture on which many generations of pigeons had evidently been carried off by cholera, until he was entreated to desist. “What,” said he, scornfully, “are tables and chairs to this Raj? If six be not enough, let the Presence give an order, and twelve shall be forthcoming. Everything shall be forthcoming.” Here he filled a native lamp with kerosene oil and set it in a box upon a stick. Luckily, the oil which he poured so lavishly from a quart bottle was

bad, or he would have been altogether consumed.

Night had fallen long before this magnificence was ended. The superfluous furniture—chairs for the most part—was shoveled out into the darkness, and by the light of a flamboyant lamplet—a merry wind forbade candles—the Englishmen went to bed, and was lulled to sleep by the rush of the water escaping from the overflow trap and the splash of the water-turtle as he missed the evasive fish. It was a curious sight. Cats and dogs rioted about the enclosure, and a wind from the lake bellied the canvas. The brushwood of the hills around snapped and cracked as beasts went through it, and creatures—not jackals—made dolorous noises. On the lake it seemed that hundreds of water-birds were keeping a hotel, and that there were arrivals and departures throughout the night. The Raj insisted upon providing a guard of two sepoys, very pleasant men, on four rupees a month. These said that tigers sometimes wandered about on the hills above the lake, but were most generally to be found five miles away. And the Englishman promptly dreamed that a one-eyed tiger came into his tent without a *purwana*. But it was only a wild cat after all; and it fled before the shoes of civilization.

The Sukh Mahal was completely separated from the city, and might have been a country-house. It should be mentioned that Boondi is jammed into a V-shaped gorge—the valley



at the main entrance being something less than five hundred yards across. As it splays out, the thickly packed houses follow its lines, and, seen from above, seem like cattle herded together preparatory to a stampede through the gate. Owing to the set of the hills, very little of the city is visible except from the Palace. It was in search of this latter that the Englishman went abroad and became so interested in the streets that he forgot all about it for a time. Jeypore is a show-city and is decently drained; Udaipur is blessed with a State Engineer and a printed form of Government; for Jodhpur the dry sand, the burning sun, and an energetic doctor have done a good deal, but Boondi has none of these things. The crampedness of the locality aggravates the evil, and it can only be in the rains which channel and furrow the rocky hill-sides that Boondi is at all swept out. The Nal Sagar, a lovely little stretch of water, takes up the head of the valley called Banda Gorge, and must, in the nature of things, receive a good deal of unholy drainage. But setting aside this weakness, it is a fascinating place—this jumbled city of straight streets and cool gardens, where gigantic mangoes and peepuls intertwine over gurgling watercourses, and the cuckoo comes at midday. It boasts no foolish Municipality to decree when a house is dangerous and uninhabitable. The newer shops are built into, on to, over, and under time-blackened ruins of an older day,

and the little children skip about tottering arcades and grass-grown walls, while their parents chatter below in the crowded bazaar. In the black slums, the same stones seem to be used over and over again for house building. Wheeled conveyances are scarce in Boondi city—there is scant room for carts, and the streets are paved with knobsome stones, unpleasant to walk over. From time to time an inroad of *Bunjaras'* pack-bullocks sweeps the main streets clear of life, or one of the Raja's elephants—he has twelve of them—blocks the way. But, for the most part, the foot-passengers have all the city for their own.

They do not hurry themselves. They sit in the sun and think, or put on all the arms in the family, and, hung with ironmongery, parade before their admiring friends. Others, lean, dark men, with bound jaws and only a tulwar for weapon, dive in and out of the dark alleys, on errands of State. It is a beautifully lazy city, doing everything in the real, true, original native way, and it is kept in very good order by the Durbar. There either is or is not an order for everything. There is no order to sell fishing-hooks, or to supply an Englishman with milk, or to change for him currency notes. He must only deal with the Durbar for whatever he requires; and wherever he goes he must be accompanied by at least two armed men. They will tell him nothing, for they know or affect to know noth-



ing of the city. They will do nothing except shout at the little innocents who joyfully run after the stranger and demand *pice*, but there they are, and there they will stay till he leaves the city, accompanying him to the gate, and waiting there a little to see that he is fairly off and away. Englishmen are not encouraged in Boondi. The intending traveler would do well to take a full suit of Political uniform with the sunflowers, and the little black sword to sit down upon. The local god is the "Agenty Sahib," and he is an incarnation without a name—at least among the lower classes. The educated, when speaking of him, always use the courtly "Bahadur" affix; and yet it is a mean thing to gird at a State which, after all, is not bound to do anything for intrusive Englishmen without any visible means of livelihood. The King of this fair city should declare the blockade absolute, and refuse to be troubled with any one except "Colon-nel Baltah, Agenty Sahib Bahadur" and the Politicals. If ever a railway is run through Kotah, as men on the Bombay side declare it must be, the cloistered glory of Boondi will depart, for Kotah is only twenty miles easterly of the city and the road is moderately good. In that day the Globe-trotter will pry about the place, and the Charitable Dispensary—a gem among dispensaries—will be public property.

The Englishman was hunting for the statue of a horse, a great horse hight Hunja, who was a

stead of Irak, and a King's gift to Rao Omeda, one time monarch of Boondi. He found it in the city square as Tod had said; and it was an unlovely statue, carven after the dropsical fashion of later Hindu art. No one seemed to know anything about it. A little further on, one cried from a byway in rusty English: "Come and see my Dispensary." There are only two men in Boondi who speak English. One is the head, and the other the assistant, teacher of the English side of Boondi Free School. The third was, some twenty years ago, a pupil of the Lahore Medical College when that institution was young; and he only remembered a word here and there. He was head of the Charitable Dispensary; and insisted upon, then and there, organizing a small levee and pulling out all his books. Escape was hopeless: nothing less than a formal inspection and introduction to all the native physicians would serve. There were sixteen beds in and about the courtyard, and between twenty and thirty out-patients stood in attendance. Making allowances for untouched Orientalism, the Dispensary is a good one, and must relieve a certain amount of human misery. There is no other in all Boondi. The operation-book, kept in English, showed the principal complaints of the country. They were: "Asthama," "Numonia," "Skindiseas," "Dabalaty" and "Loin-bite." This last item occurred again and again—three and four cases per week—and it was not until the Doctor said

"*Sher se mara*" that the Englishman read it aright. It was "lion-bite," or tiger, if you insist upon zoological accuracy. There was one incorrigible idiot, a handsome young man, naked as the day, who sat in the sunshine, shivering and pressing his hands to his head. "I have given him blisters and setons—have tried native and English treatment for two years, but it is no use. He is always as you see him, and now he stays here by the favor of the Durbar, which is a very good and pitiful Durbar," said the Doctor. There were many such pensioners of the Durbar—men afflicted with chronic "asthama" who stayed "by favor," and were kindly treated. They were resting in the sunshine their hands on their knees, sure that their daily dole of grain and tobacco and opium would be forthcoming. "All folk, even little children, eat opium here," said the Doctor, and the diet-book proved it. After laborious investigation of everything, down to the last indent to Bombay for Europe medicines, the Englishman was suffered to depart. "Sir, I thank . . .," began the Native Doctor, but the rest of the sentence stuck. Sixteen years in Boondi does not increase knowledge of English; and he went back to his patients, gravely conning over the name of the Principal of the Lahore Medical School—a College now—who had taught him all he knew, and to whom he intended to write. There was something pathetic in the man's catching at news from the outside world of men he had

known as Assistant and House Surgeons who are now Rai Bahadurs, and his parade of the few shreds of English that still clung to him. May he treat "loin-bites" and "catrack" successfully for many years. In the happy, indolent fashion that must have merits which we cannot understand, he is doing a good work, and the Durbar allows his Dispensary as much as it wants.

Close to the Dispensary stood the Free School, and thither an importunate *munshi* steered the Englishman, who, by this time, was beginning to persuade herself that he really was an accredited agent of Government, sent to report on the progress of Boondi. From a peepul-shaded courtyard came a clamor of young voices. Thirty or forty little ones, from five to eight years old, were sitting in an open veranda learning accounts and Hindustani, said the teacher. No need to ask from what castes they came, for it was written on their faces that they were Mahajans, Oswals, Aggerwals, and in one or two cases, it seemed, Sharawaks of Guzerat. They were learning the business of their lives, and, in time, would take their father's places, and show in how many ways money might be manipulated. Here the profession-type came out with startling distinctness. Through the chubbiness of almost babyhood, or the delicate suppleness of maturer years, in mouth and eyes and hands, it betrayed itself. The Rahtor, who comes of a fighting stock, is a fine animal, and well bred ;

the Hara, who seems to be more compactly built, is also a fine animal ; but for a race that show blood in every line of their frame, from the arch of the instep to the modeling of the head, the financial—trading is too coarse a word—the financial class of Rajputana appears to be the most remarkable. Later in life may become clouded with fat jowl and paunch ; but in his youth, his quick-eyed, nimble youth, the young Marwar, to give him his business title, is really a thing of beauty. His manners are courtly. The bare ground and a few slates sufficed for the children who were merely learning the ropes that drag States ; but the English class, of boys from ten to twelve, was supplied with real benches and forms and a table with a cloth top. The assistant teacher, for the head was on leave, was a self-taught man of Boondi, young and delicate looking, who preferred reading to speaking English. His youngsters were supplied with “The Third English Reading Book,” and were painfully thumbing their way through a doggerel poem about an “old man with hoary hair.” One boy, bolder than the rest, slung an English sentence at the visitor, and collapsed. It was his little stock-in-trade, and the rest regarded him enviously. The Durbar supports the school, which is entirely free and open ; a just distinction being maintained between the various castes. The old race prejudice against payment for knowledge came out in reply to a question. “You must not sell teaching,” said

the teacher ; and the class murmured applaudively, " You must not sell teaching."

The population of Boondi seems more obviously mixed than that of the other States. There are four or five thousand Mahometans within its walls, and a sprinkling of aborigines of various varieties, besides the human raffle that the Bunjaras bring in their train, with Pathans and sleek Delhi men. The new heraldry of the State is curious—something after this sort. *Or*, a demi-god, *sable*, issuant of flames, holding in right hand a sword and in the left a bow—*all proper*. In chief, a dagger of the *second*, sheathed *vert*, fessewise over seven arrows in sheaf of the *second*. This latter blazon Boondi holds in commemoration of the defeat of an Imperial Prince who rebelled against the Delhi Throne in the days of Jehangir, when Boondi, for value received, took service under the Mahometan. It might also be, but here there is no certainty, the memorial of Rao Rutton's victory over Prince Khoorm, when the latter strove to raise all Rajputana against Jehangir his father ; or of a second victory over a riotous lordling who harried Mewar a little later. For this exploit, the annals say, Jehangir gave Rao Rutton honorary flags and kettle-drums which may have been melted down by the science of the Heralds College into the blazon aforesaid. All the heraldry of Rajputana is curious, and, to such as hold that there is any worth in the " Royal Science," interesting. Udaipur's

shield is, naturally *gules* a sun in splendor, as befits the "children of the Sun and Fire," and one of the most ancient houses in India. Her crest is the straight Rajput sword, the *Khanda*, for an account of the worship of which very powerful divinity read Tod. The supporters are a Bhil and a Rajput, attired for the forlorn-hope; commemorating not only the defenses of Chitor, but also the connection of the great Bappa Rawul with the Bhils, who even now play the principal part in the Crown-Marking of a Rana of Udaipur. Here, again, Tod explains the matter at length. Banswara claims alliance with Udaipur, and carries a sun, with a label of difference of some kind. Jeypore has the five-colored flag of Amber with a sun, because the House claim descent from Rama, and her crest is a kuchnar tree, which is the bearing of Dasaratha, father of Rama. The white horse, which faces the tiger as supporter, may or may not be memorial of the great *aswamedha yuga*, or horse sacrifice, that Jey Singh, who built Jeypore, did—*not* carry out.

Jodhpur has the five-colored flag, with a falcon, in which shape Durga, the patron Goddess of the State, has been sometimes good enough to appear. She has perched in the form of a wagtail on the howdah of the Chief of Jeysulmir, whose shield is blazoned with "forts in a desert land," and a naked left arm holding a broken spear, because, the legend goes, Jeysulmir was once galled by a horse with a magic spear. They tell the story to-day, but



it is a long one. The supporters of the shield—this is canting heraldry with a vengeance!—are antelopes of the desert spangled with gold coin, because the State was long the refuge of the wealthy bankers of India.

Bikanir, a younger House of Jodhpur, carries three white hawks on the five-colored flag. The patron Goddess of Bikanir once turned the thorny jungle round the city to fruit trees, and the crest therefore is a green tree—strange emblem for a desert principality. The motto, however, is a good one. When the greater part of the Rajput States were vassals of Akbar, and he sent them abroad to do his will, certain Princes objected to crossing the Indus, and asked Bikanir to head the mutiny because his State was the least accessible. He consented, on condition that they would all for one day greet him thus: "*Jey Jangal dar Badshah!*" History shows what became of the objectors, and Bikanir's motto: "Hail to the King of the Waste!" proves that the tale *must* be true. But from Boondi to Bikanir is a long digression, bred by idleness on the bund of the Burra. It would have been sinful not to let down a line into those crowded waters, and the Guards, who were Mahometans, said that if the Sahib did not eat fish, they did. And the Sahib fished luxuriously, catching two and three pounders, of a perch-like build, whenever he chose to cast. He was wearied of schools and dispensaries, and the futility of heraldry



accorded well with sloth—that is to say Boondi.

It should be noted, none the less, that in this part of the world the soberest mind will believe anything—believe in the ghosts by the Gau Mukh, and the dead Thakurs who get out of their tombs and ride round the Burra Talao at Boondi—will credit every legend and lie that rises as naturally as the red flush of sunset, to gild the dead glories of Rajasthan.

## XVII.

“THIS is a devil’s place you have come to, Sahib. No grass for the horses, and the people don’t understand anything, and their dirty *pice* are no good in Nasirabad. Look here.” Ram Baksh wrathfully exhibited a handful of lumps of copper. The nuisance of taking a native out of his own beat is that he forthwith regards you not only as the author of his being, but of all his misfortunes as well. He is as hampering as a frightened child and as irritating as a man. “Padre Martum Sahib never came here,” said Ram Baksh, with an air of one who had been led against his will into bad company.

A story about a rat that found a piece of turmeric and set up a bunnia’s shop had sent the one-eyed *munshi* away, but a company of lesser *munshis*, runners, and the like were in attendance, and they said that money might be changed at the Treasury, which was in the Palace. It was quite impossible to change it anywhere else—there was no order. From the Sukh Mahal to the Palace the road ran through the heart of the city, and by reason of the continual shouting of the *munshis*, not more than ten thousand of the fifty thousand people of Boondi knew for what purpose the Sahib was journeying through their midst.

Cataract was the most prevalent affliction, cataract in its worst forms, and it was, therefore, necessary that men should come very close to look at the stranger. They were in no sense rude, but they stared devoutly. "He has not come for *shikar*, and he will not take petitions. He has come to see the place, and God knows what he is." The description was quite correct, as far as it went ; but, somehow or another, when shouted out at four cross-ways in the midst of a very pleasant little gathering it did not seem to add to dignity or command respect.

It has been written "the *coup d'œil* of the castellated Palace of Boondi, from whichever side you approach it, is perhaps the most striking in India. Whoever has seen the Palace of Boondi can easily picture to himself the hanging gardens of Semiramis." This is true—and more too. To give on paper any adequate idea of the Bondi-ki-Mahal is impossible. Jeypore Palace may be called the Versailles of India ; Udaipur's House of State is dwarfed by the hills round it and the spread of the Pichola Lake ; Jodhpur's House of Strife, gray towers on red rock, is the work of giants, but the Palace of Boondi, even in broad daylight, is such a Palace as men build for themselves in uneasy dreams—the work of goblins more than of men. It is built into and out of the hillside, in gigantic terrace on terrace, and dominates the whole of the city. But a detailed description of it were useless.

Owing to the dip of the valley in which the city stands, it can only be well seen from one place, the main road of the city ; and from that point looks like an avalanche of masonry ready to rush down and block the gorge. Like all the other Palaces of Rajputana, it is the work of many hands, and the present Raja has thrown out a bastion of no small size on one of the lower levels, which has been four or five years in the building. No one knows where the hill begins and where the Palace ends. Men say that there are subterranean chambers leading into the heart of the hills, and passages communicating with the extreme limits of Taragarh, the giant fortress that crowns the hill and flanks the whole of the valley on the Palace side. They say that there is as much room under as above ground, and that none have traversed the whole extent of the Palace. Looking at it from below, the Englishman could readily believe that nothing was impossible for those who had built it. The dominant impression was of height—height that heaved itself out of the hillside and weighed upon the eyelids of the beholder. The steep slope of the land had helped the builders in securing this effect. From the main road of the city a steep stone-paved ascent led to the first gate—name not communicated by the zealous following. Two gaudily painted fishes faced each other over the arch, and there was little except glaring color ornamentation

visible. This gate gave into what they called the *chowk* of the Palace, and one had need to look twice ere realizing that this open space, crammed with human life, was a spur of the hill on which the Palace stood, paved and built over. There had been little attempt at leveling the ground. The foot-worn stones followed the contours of the ground, and ran up to the walls of the Palace smooth as glass. Immediately facing the Gate of the Fish was the Quarter-Guard barracks, a dark and dirty room, and here, in a chamber hollowed out in a wall, were stored the big drums of State, the *nakarras*. The appearance of the Englishman seemed to be the signal for smiting the biggest of all, and the dull thunder rolled up the Palace *chowk*, and came back from the unpierced Palace walls in hollow groaning. It was an eerie welcome—this single, sullen boom. In this enclosure, four hundred years ago, if the legend be true, a son of the great Rao Bando, who dreamed a dream as Pharaoh did and saved Boondi from famine, left a little band of Haras to wait his bidding while he went up into the Palace and slew his two uncles who had usurped the throne and abandoned the faith of their fathers. When he had pierced one and hacked the other, as they sat alone and unattended, he called out to his followers, who made a slaughter-house of the enclosure and cut up the usurpers' adherents. At the best of times men slip on these smooth stones; and when the place was

swimming in blood, foothold must have been treacherous indeed.

An inquiry for the place of the murder of the uncles—it is marked by a staircase slab, or Tod, the accurate, is at fault—was met by the answer that the Treasury was close at hand. They speak a pagan tongue in Boondi, swallow half their words; and adulterate the remainder with local patois. What can be extracted from a people who call four miles variously *do kosh*, *do kush*, *dhi hkas*, *doo-a koth*, and *diakast* all one word? The country-folk are quite unintelligible; which simplifies matters. It is the catching of a shadow of a meaning here and there, the hunting for directions cloaked in dialect, that is annoying. Foregoing his archæological researches, the Englishman sought the Treasury. He took careful notes; he even made a very bad drawing, but the Treasury of Boondi defied pinning down before the public. There was a gash in the brown flank of the Palace—and this gash was filled with people. A broken bees' comb with the whole hive busily at work on repairs will give a very fair idea of this extraordinary place—the Heart of Boondi. The sunlight was very vivid without and the shadows were heavy within, so that little could be seen except this clinging mass of humanity wriggling like maggots in a carcass. A stone staircase ran up to a rough veranda built out of the wall, and in the wall was a cave-like room, the

guardian of whose depths was one of the refined financial classes, a man with very small hands and soft, low voice. He was girt with a sword, and held authority over the Durbar funds. He referred the Englishman courteously to another branch of the department, to find which necessitated a blundering progress up another narrow staircase crowded with loungers of all kinds. Here everything shone from constant contact of bare feet and hurrying bare shoulders. The staircase was the thing that, seen from without, had produced the bees' comb impression. At the top was a long veranda shaded from the sun, and here the Boondi Treasury worked, under the guidance of a gray-haired old man, whose sword lay by the side of his comfortably wadded cushion. He controlled twenty or thirty writers, each wrapped round a huge, country paper account-book, and each far too busy to raise his eyes.

The babble on the staircase might have been the noise of the sea so far as these men were concerned. It ebbed and flowed in regular beats, and spread out far into the courtyard below. Now and again the *click-click-click* of a scabbard tip being dragged against the wall, cut the dead sound of tramping naked feet, and a soldier would stumble up the narrow way into the sunlight. He was received, and sent back or forward by a knot of keen-eyed loungers, who seemed to act as a buffer between the peace of the Se-

cretariat and the pandemonium of the Administrative. *Saises* and grass-cutters, mahouts of elephants, brokers, mahajuns, villagers from the district, and here and there a shock-headed aborigine, swelled the mob on and at the foot of the stairs. As they came up, they met the buffer-men who spoke in low voices and appeared to filter them according to their merits. Some were sent to the far end of the veranda, where everything melted away in a fresh crowd of dark faces. Others were sent back, and joined the detachment shuffling for their shoes in the *chowk*. One servant of the Palace withdrew himself to the open, underneath the veranda, and there sat yapping from time to time like a hungry dog: "The grass! The grass! The grass!" But the men with the account-books never stirred. And they bowed their heads gravely and made entry or erasure, turning back the rustling leaves. Not often does a reach of the River of Life so present itself that it can without alteration be transferred to canvas. But the Treasury of Boondi, the view up the long veranda, stood complete and ready for any artist who cared to make it his own. And by that lighter and less malicious irony of Fate, who is always giving nuts to those who have no teeth, the picture was clinched and brought together by a winking, brass hookah-bowl of quaint design, pitched carelessly upon a roll of dull red cloth in the foreground. The faces of the accountants were of pale gold, for they



were an untanned breed, and the face of the old man, their controller, was frosted silver.

It was a strange Treasury, but no other could have suited the Palace. The Englishman watched, open-mouthed, blaming himself because he could not catch the meaning of the orders given to the flying chaprassies, nor make anything of the hum in the veranda and the tumult on the stairs. The old man took the commonplace currency note and announced his willingness to give change in silver. "We have no small notes here," he said. "They are not wanted. In a little while, when you next bring the Honor of your Presence this way, you shall find the silver."

The Englishman was taken down the steps and fell into the arms of a bristly giant who had left his horse in the courtyard, and the giant spoke at length, waving his arms in the air, but the Englishman could not understand him and dropped into the hubbub at the Palace foot. Except the main lines of the building there is nothing straight or angular about it. The rush of people seems to have rounded and softened every corner, as a river grinds down boulders. From the lowest tier, two zigzags, all of rounded stones sunk in mortar, took the Englishman to a gate where two carved elephants were thrusting at each other over the arch; and, because neither he nor any one round him could give the gate a name, he called it the "Gate of the Elephants."

Here the noise from the Treasury was softened, and entry through the gate brought him into a well-known world, the drowsy peace of a King's Palace. There was a courtyard surrounded by stables, in which were kept chosen horses, and two or three grooms were sleeping in the sun. There was no other life except the whir and coo of the pigeons. In time—though there really is no such a thing as time off the line of railway—an official appeared begirt with the skewer-like keys that open the native bayonet-locks, each from six inches to a foot long. Where was the Raj Mahal in which, sixty-six years ago, Tod formally installed Ram Singh, "who is now in his eleventh year, fair and with a lively, intelligent cast of face"? The warden made no answer, but led to a room, overlooking the courtyard, in which two armed men stood before an empty throne of white marble. They motioned silently that none must pass immediately before the seat of the King, but go round, keeping to the far side of the double row of pillars. Near the walls were stone slabs pierced to take the butts of long, venomous, black bamboo lances; rude coffers were disposed about the room, and ruder sketches of Ganesh adorned the walls. "The men," said the warden, "watch here day and night because this place is the Rutton Daulat." That, you will concede, is lucid enough. He who does not understand it, may go to for a thick-headed barbarian.

From the Rutton Daulat the warden unlocked doors that led into a hall of audience—the Chutter Mahal—built by Raja Chutter Lal, who was killed more than two hundred years ago in the latter days of Shah Jehan for whom he fought. Two rooms, each supported on double rows of pillars, flank the open space, in the center of which is a marble reservoir. Here the Englishman looked anxiously for some of the atrocities of the West, and was pleased to find that, with the exception of a vase of artificial flowers and a clock, there was nothing that jarred with the exquisite pillars, and the raw blaze of color in the roofs of the rooms. In the middle of these impertinent observations, something sighed—sighed like a distressed ghost. Unaccountable voices are at all times unpleasant, especially when the hearer is some hundred feet or so above ground in an unknown Palace in an unknown land. A gust of wind had found its way through one of the latticed balconies, and had breathed upon a thin plate of metal, some astrological instrument, slung gongwise on a tripod. The tone was as soft as that of an Æolian harp, and, because of the surroundings, infinitely more plaintive.

There was an inlaid ivory door, set in lintel and posts crusted with looking-glass—all apparently old work. This opened into a darkened room where there were gilt and silver charpoys, and portraits, in the native fashion, of the illustrious dead of Boondi. Beyond the

darkness was a balcony clinging to the sheer side of the Palace, and it was then that the Englishman realized to what a height he had climbed without knowing it. He looked down upon the bustle of the Treasury and the stream of life flowing into and out of the Gate of the Fishes where the big drums lie. Lifting his eyes, he saw how Boondi City had built itself, spreading from west to east as the confined valley became too narrow and the years more peaceable. The Boondi hills are the barrier that separates the stony, uneven ground near Deoli from the flats of Kotah, twenty miles away. From the Palace balcony the road to the eye is clear to the banks of the Chumbul River, which was the Debatable Ford in times gone by and was leaped, as all rivers with any pretensions to a pedigree have been, by more than one magic horse. Northward and easterly the hills run out to Indurgarh, and southward and westerly to territory marked "disputed" on the map in the present year of grace. From this balcony the Raja can see to the limit of his territory eastward, his empire all under his hand. He is, or the Politicals err, that same Ram Singh who was installed by Tod in 1821, and for whose success in killing his first deer, Tod was, by the Queen-Mother of Boondi, bidden to rejoice. To-day the people of Boondi say: "This Durbar is very old: so old that few men remember its beginning, for that was in our father's time." It is related also of Boondi that, on the occa-

sion of the Queen's Jubilee, they said proudly that their ruler had reigned for sixty years, and he was a man. They saw nothing astonishing in the fact of a woman having reigned for fifty. History does not say whether they jubilated; for there are no Englishmen in Boondi to write accounts of demonstrations and foundation-stone laying to the daily newspapers, and Boondi is very, very small. In the early morning you may see a man pantingly chased out of the city by another man with a naked sword. This is the mail and the mail-guard; and the effect is as though runner and swordsman lay under a doom—the one to fly with the fear of death always before him as men fly in dreams, and the other to perpetually fail of his revenge.

The warden unlocked more doors and led the Englishman still higher, but into a garden—a heavily timbered garden with a tank for gold fish in the midst. For once the impassive following smiled when they saw that the Englishman was impressed.

“This,” said they, “is the Rang Bilas.” “But who made it?” “Who knows? It was made long ago.” The Englishman looked over the garden-wall, a foot-high parapet, and shuddered. There was only the flat side of the Palace, and a drop on to the stones of the zigzag scores of feet below. Above him was the riven hillside and the decaying wall of Taragarh, and behind him this fair garden, hung like Mahomet's coffin,

but full of the noise of birds and the talking of the wind in the branches. The warden entered into a lengthy explanation of the nature of the delusion, showing how—but he was stopped before he was finished. His listener did not want to know “how the trick was done.” Here was the garden, and there were three or four stories climbed to reach it. At one end of the garden was a small room, under treatment by native artists who were painting the panels with historical pictures, in distemper. Theirs was florid polychromatic art, but skirting the floor was a series of frescoes in red, black, and white, of combats with elephants, bold and temperate as good German work. They were worn and defaced in places ; but the hand of some bygone limner, who did not know how to waste a line, showed under the bruises and scratches, and put the newer work to shame.

Here the tour of the Palace ended ; and it must be remembered that the Englishman had not gone the depth of three rooms into one flank. Acres of building lay to the right of him, and above the lines of the terraces he could see the tops of green trees. “Who knew how many gardens, such as the Rang Bilas, were to be found in the Palace ?” No one answered directly, but all said that there were many. The warden gathered up his keys, and, locking each door behind him as he passed, led the way down to earth. But before he had crossed the garden the English-

man heard, deep down in the bowels of the Palace, a woman's voice singing, and the voice rang as do voices in caves. All Palaces in India excepting dead ones, such as that of Amber, are full of eyes. In some, as has been said, the idea of being watched is stronger than in others. In Boondi Palace it was overpowering—being far worse than in the green shuttered corridors of Jodhpur. There were trap-doors on the tops of terraces, and windows veiled in foliage, and bull's-eyes set low in unexpected walls, and many other peep-holes and places of vantage. In the end, the Englishman looked devoutly at the floor, but when the voice of the woman came up from under his feet, he felt that there was nothing left for him but to go. Yet, excepting only this voice, there was deep silence everywhere, and nothing could be seen.

The warden returned to the Chutter Mahal to pick up a lost key. The brass table of the planets was sighing softly to itself as it swung to and fro in the wind. That was the last view of the interior of the Palace, the empty court, and the swinging, sighing astrolabe.

About two hours afterwards, when he had reached the other side of the valley and seen the full extent of the buildings, the Englishman began to realize first that he had not been taken through one-tenth of the Palace; and secondly, that he would do well to measure its extent by acres, in preference to

meaner measures. But what made him blush hotly, all alone among the tombs on the hillside, was the idea that he with his ridiculous demands for eggs, firewood, and sweet drinking water should have clattered and chattered through any part of it at all.

He began to understand why Boondi does not encourage Englishmen.



## XVIII.

“LET us go hence my songs, she will not hear. Let us go hence together without fear.” But Ram Baksh the irrepressible sang it in altogether a baser key. He came by night to the pavilion on the lake, while the sepoys were cooking their fish, and reiterated his whine about the devildom of the country into which the Englishman had dragged him. Padre Martum Sahib would never have thus treated the owner of sixteen horses, all fast and big ones, and eight superior “shutin-ton-gas.” “Let us get away,” said Ram Baksh. “You are not here for *shikar*, and the water is very bad.” It was indeed, except when taken from the lake, and then it only tasted fishy. “We will go, Ram Baksh,” said the Englishman. “We will go in the very early morning, and in the mean time here is fish to stay your stomach with.”

When a transparent piece of canvas, which fails by three feet to reach ceiling or floor, is the only bar between the East and the West, he would be a churl indeed who stood upon invidious race distinctions. The Englishman went out and fraternized with the Military—the four-rupee soldiers of Boondi who guarded him. They were armed, one with an old Tower musket crazy as to nipple

and hammer, one with a native-made smooth-bore, and one with a composite contrivance—English sporting muzzle-loader stock with a compartment for a jointed cleaning-rod and hammered octagonal native barrel, wire-fastened, a tuft of cotton on the foresight. All three guns were loaded, and the owners were very proud of them. They were simple folk, these men-at-arms, with an inordinate appetite for broiled fish. They were not *always* soldiers they explained. They cultivated their crops until called for any duty that might turn up. They were paid now and again, at intervals, but they were paid in coin and not in kind.

The *munshis* and the vakils and the runners had departed after seeing that the Englishman was safe for the night, so the freedom of the little gathering on the bund was unrestrained. The *chowkidar* came out of his cave into the firelight. He took a fish and incontinently choked, for he was a feeble old man. Set right again, he launched into a very long and quite unintelligible story while the sepoys said reverently: "He is an old man and remembers many things." As he babbled, the night shut in upon the lake and the valley of Boondi. The last cows were driven into the water for their evening drink, the waterfowl and the monkeys went to bed, and the stars came out and made a new firmament in the untroubled bosom of the lake. The light of the fire showed the ruled lines of the bund

springing out of the soft darkness of the wooded hill on the left and disappearing into the solid darkness of a bare hill on the right. Below the bund a man cried aloud to keep wandering pigs from the gardens whose tree-tops rose to a level with the bund-edge. Beyond the trees all was swaddled in gloom. When the gentle buzz of the unseen city died out, it seemed as though the bund were the very Swordwide Bridge that runs, as every one knows, between this world and the next. The water lapped and muttered, and now and again a fish jumped, with the shatter of broken glass, blurring the peace of the reflected heavens.

“And duller should I be than some fat weed  
That rolls itself at ease on Lethe’s wharf.”

The poet who wrote those lines knew nothing whatever of Lethe’s wharf. The Englishman had found it, and it seemed to him, at that hour and in that place, that it would be good and desirable never to return to the Commissioners and the Deputy Commissioners any more, but to lie at ease on the warm sunlit bund by day, and, at night, near a shadow-breeding fire, to listen for the strangled voices and whispers of the darkness in the hills. Thus after as long a life as the *chowkidar*’s dying easily and pleasantly, and being buried in a red tomb on the borders of the lake. Surely no one would come to reclaim him across those weary, weary miles of rock-strewn

road . . . . "And this," said the *chowkidar*, raising his voice to enforce attention, "is true talk. Everybody knows it, and now the Sahib knows it. I am an old man." He fell asleep once, with his head on the clay pipe that was doing duty for a whole *huqa* among the company. He had been talking for nearly a quarter of an hour.

See how great a man is the true novelist! Six or seven thousand miles away, Walter Besant of the Golden Pen had created Mr. Maliphant—the ancient of figurehead, in the *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*, and here, in Boondi, the Englishman had found Mr. Maliphant in the withered flesh. So he drank Walter Besant's health in the water of the Burra Talao. One of the sepoy's turned himself round, with a clatter of accouterments, shifted his blanket under his elbow, and told a tale. It had something to do with his *khet*, and a *gunna* which certainly was not sugar-cane. It was elusive. At times it seemed that it was a woman, then changed to a right of way, and lastly appeared to be a tax; but the more he attempted to get at its meaning through the curious patois in which its doings or its merit were enveloped, the more dazed the Englishman became. None the less the story was a fine one, embellished with much dramatic gesture which told powerfully against the firelight. Then the second sepoy, who had been enjoying the pipe all the time, told a tale, the purport of which was that the dead

in the tombs round the lake were wont to get up of nights and go hunting. This was a fine and ghostly story; and its dismal effect was much heightened by some clamor of the night far up the lake beyond the floor of stars.

The third sepoy said nothing. He had eaten too much fish and was fast asleep by the side of the *chowkidar*.

They were all Mahometans, and consequently all easy to deal with. A Hindu is an excellent person, but . . . but . . . there is no knowing what is in his heart, and he is hedged about with so many strange observances.

This Hindu or Musalman bent, which each Englishman's mind must take before he has been three years in the country, is, of course, influenced by Province or Presidency. In Rajputana generally, the Political swears by the Hindu, and holds that the Mahometan is untrustworthy. But a man who will eat with you and take your tobacco, sinking the fiction that it has been doctored with infidel wines, cannot be very bad after all.

That night when the tales were all told and the guard, bless them, were snoring peaceably in the starlight, a man came stealthily into the enclosure of canvas and woke the Englishman, muttering "Sahib, Sahib," in his ear. It was no robber but some poor devil with a petition—a grimy, welted paper. He was absolutely unintelligible, and stammered almost to dumbness. He stood by the bed, alternately bowing to the earth and standing erect, his

arms spread aloft, and his whole body working as he tried to force out some rebellious word in a key that should not wake the men without. What could the Englishman do? He was no Government servant, and had no concern with petitions. The man clicked and choked and gasped in his desperate desire to make the Sahib understand. But it was no use ; and in the end he departed as he had come—bowed, abject, and unintelligible.

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*

Let every word written against Ganesh be rescinded. It was by his ordering that the Englishman saw such a dawn on the Burra Talao as he had never before set eyes on. Every fair morning is a reprint, blurred perhaps, of the First Day ; but this splendor was a thing to be put aside from all other days and remembered. The stars had no fire in them and the fish had stopped jumping, when the black water of the lake paled and grew gray. While he watched it seemed to the Englishman that voices on the hills were intoning the first verses of Genesis. The gray light moved on the face of the waters till, with no interval, a blood-red glare shot up from the horizon and, inky black against the intense red, a giant crane floated out towards the sun. In the still-shadowed city the great Palace Drum boomed and throbbed to show that the gates were open, while the dawn swept up the valley and made all things clear. The blind man who said, "The blast of a trumpet is

red," spoke only the truth. The breaking of the red dawn is like the blast of a trumpet.

"What," said the *chowkidar*, picking the ashes of the overnight fire out of his beard, "what, I say, are five eggs or twelve eggs to such a Raj as ours? What also are fowls—what are" . . . "There was no talk of fowls. Where is the fowl-man from whom you got the eggs?" "He is here. No, he is there. I do not know. I am an old man, and I and the Raj supply everything without price. The fowl-man will be paid by the State—liberally paid. Let the Sahib be happy. *Wah. Wah.*"

Experience of forced labor in Himalayan villages had made the Englishman very tender in raising supplies that were given gratis; but the fowl-man could not be found, and the value of his wares was, later, paid to Ganesh—Ganesh of Situr, for that is the name of the village full of priests, through which the Englishman had passed in ignorance two days before. A double handful of sweet smelling flowers made the receipt.

Boondi was wide-awake before half-past seven in the morning. Her hunters, on foot and on horse, were filing towards the Deoli Gate. They would hunt tiger and deer they said, even with matchlocks and muzzle loaders as uncouth as those the Sahib saw. They were a merry company and chaffed the Quarter-Guard at the gate unmercifully when a bullock-cart, laden with the cases of the



“Batoum Naphtha and Oil Company” blocked the road. One of them had been a soldier of the Queen, and, excited by the appearance of a Sahib, did so rebuke and badger the Quarter-Guard for their slovenliness that they threatened to come out of the barracks and destroy him.

So, after one last look at the Palace high up the hillside, the Englishman was borne away along the Deoli Road. The peculiarity of Boondi is the peculiarity of the covered pit-fall. One does not see it till one falls into it. A quarter of a mile from the gate, town and Palace were invisible. But the Englishman was grieved at heart. He had fallen in love with Boondi the beautiful, and believed that he would never again see anything half so fair. The utter untouchedness of the town was one-half the charm and its association the other. Read Tod, who is far too good to be chipped or sampled ; read Tod luxuriously on the bund of the Burra Talao, and the spirit of the place will enter into you and you will be happy.

To enjoy life thoroughly, haste and bustle must be abandoned. Ram Baksh has said that Englishmen are always bothering to go forward, and for this reason, though beyond doubt they pay well and readily, are not wise men. He gave utterance to this philosophy after he had mistaken his road and pulled up in what must have been a disused quarry hard by a cane-field. There were patches and



pockets of cultivation along the rocky road, where men grew cotton, chillies, tobacco, and sugar-cane. "I will get you sugar-cane," said Ram Baksh. "Then we will go forward, and perhaps some of these jungly-fools will tell us where the road is." A "jungly fool," a tender of goats, did in time appear, but there was no hurry; the sugar-cane was sweet and purple and the sun warm.

The Englishman lay out at high noon on the crest of a rolling upland crowned with rock, and heard, as a loafer had told him he would hear, the "set of the day," which is as easily discernible as the change of tone between the rising and the falling tide. At a certain hour the impetus of the morning dies out, and all things, living and inanimate, turn their thoughts to the prophecy of the coming night. The little wandering breezes drop for a time, and, when they blow afresh, bring the message. The "set of the day," as the loafer said, has changed, the machinery is beginning to run down, the unseen tides of the air are falling. This moment of change can only be felt in the open and in touch with the earth, and once discovered, seems to place the finder in deep accord and fellowship with all things on earth. Perhaps this is why the genuine loafer, though "frequently drunk," is "always polite to the stranger," and shows such a genial tolerance towards the weaknesses of mankind, black, white, or brown.

In the evening when the jackals were scut-

tling across the roads and the cranes had gone to roost, came Deoli the desolate, and an unpleasant meeting. Six days away from his kind had bred in a Cockney heart a great desire to see a fellow-subject. An elaborate loaf through the cantonment—fifteen minutes' walk from end to end—showed only one distant dog-cart and a small English child with an ayah. There was grass in the soldierly straight roads, and some of the cross-cuts had never been used at all since the days when the cantonment had been first laid out. In the western corner lay the cemetery—the only carefully tended and newly whitewashed thing in this God-forgotten place. Some years ago a man had said good-by to the Englishman ; adding cheerily : “ We shall meet again. The world's a very little place y'know.”

His prophecy was a true one, for the two met indeed, but the prophet was lying in Deoli Cemetery near the well, which is decorated so ecclesiastically with funeral urns.

## XIX.

IN the morning the tonga rattled past Deoli Cemetery into the open, where the Deoli Irregulars were drilling. They marked the beginning of civilization and white shirts ; and so they seemed altogether detestable. Yet another day's jolting, enlivened by the philosophy of Ram Baksh, and then came Nasirabad. The last pair of ponies suggested serious thought. They had covered eighteen miles at an average speed of eight miles an hour, and were well-conditioned little rats. "A Colonel Sahib gave me this one for a present," said Ram Baksh, flicking the near one. "It was his child's pony. The child was five years old. When he went away, the Colonel Sahib said : "Ram Baksh, you are a good man. Never have I seen such a good man. This horse is yours." Ram Baksh was getting a horse's work out of a child's pony. Surely we in India work the land much as the Colonel Sahib worked his son's mount ; making it do child's work when so much more can be screwed out of it. A native and a native State deals otherwise with horse and holding. Perhaps our extreme scrupulousness in handling may be statecraft, but, after even a short sojourn in places which are dealt with not so tenderly, it seems absurd. There are States

where things are done, and done without protest, that would make the hair of the educated native stand on end with horror. These things are of course not expedient to write ; because their publication would give a great deal of unnecessary pain and heart-searching to estimable native administrators who have the hope of a star before their eyes and would not better matters in the least.

Note this fact though. With the exception of such journals as, occupying a central position in British territory, levy blackmail from the neighboring States, there are no independent papers in Rajputana. A King may start a weekly, to encourage a taste for Sanskrit and high Hindi, or a Prince may create a Court Chronicle ; but that is all. A "free press" is not allowed, and this the native journalist knows. With good management, he can, keeping under the shadow of our flag, raise two hundred rupees from a big man here, and five hundred from a rich man there, but he does not establish himself across the Border. To one who has reason to hold a stubborn disbelief in even the elementary morality of the native press, this bashfulness and lack of enterprise is amusing. But to return to the native States' administrations. There is nothing exactly wrong in the methods of government that are overlaid with English terms and forms. They are vigorous, in certain points ; and where they are not vigorous, there is a cheery happy-go-luckiness about the

arrangement that must be seen to be understood. The shift and play of a man's fortune across the Border is as sudden as anything in the days of Haroun-al-Raschid of blessed memory, and there are stories, to be got for the unearthing, as wild and as improbable as those in the *Thousand and One Nights*. Most impressive of all is the way in which the country is "used," and its elasticity under pressure. In the good old days the Durbar raised everything it could from the people, and the King spent as much as ever he could on his personal pleasures. Now the institution of the Political agent has stopped the grabbing, for which, by the way, some of the monarchs are not in the least grateful—and smoothed the outward face of things. But there is still a difference, between our ways and the ways of the other places. A year spent among native States ought to send a man back to the Decencies and the Law Courts and the Rights of the Subject with a supreme contempt for those who rave about the oppressions of our brutal bureaucracy. One month nearly taught an average Englishman that it was the proper thing to smite anybody of mean aspect and obstructive tendencies on the mouth with a shoe. Hear what an intelligent loafer said. His words are at least as valuable as these babblings. He was, as usual, wonderfully drunk, and the gift of speech came upon him. The conversation—he was a great politician this loafer—had turned on the poverty of

India. "Poor?" said he. "Of course it's poor. Oh, yes, d—d poor. And I'm poor, an' you're poor, altogether. Do you expect people will give you money without you ask 'em? No, I tell you, Sir, there's enough money in India to pave Hell with if you could only get at it. I've kep' servants in my day. Did they ever leave me without a hundred or a hundred and fifty rupees put by—and never touched? You mark that. Does any black man who had been in Guv'ment service go away without hundreds an' hundreds put by, and never touched? You mark that. Money? The place stinks o' money—just kept out o' sight. Do you ever know a native that didn't say *Garib admī* (I'm a poor man)? They've been sayin' *Garib admī* so long that the Guv'ment learns to believe 'em, and now they're all bein' treated as though they was paupers. I'm a pauper, an' you're a pauper—we 'aven't got anything hid in the ground—an' so's every white man in this forsaken country. But the Injian he's a rich man. How do I know? Because I've tramped on foot, or warrant pretty well from one end of the place to the other, an' I know what I'm talkin' about, and this 'ere Guv'ment goes peckin' an' fiddlin' over its tuppenny-ha'penny little taxes as if it was afraid. Which it is. You see how they do things in ——. It's six sowars here, and ten sowars there, and—'Pay up, you brutes, or we'll pull your ears over your head.' And when they've taken all they can

get, the headman, he says : ‘ This is a dashed poor yield. I’ll come again.’ *Of course* the people digs up something out of the ground, and they pay. I know the way it’s done and that’s the way to do it. You can’t go to an Injian an’ say : ‘ Look here. Can you pay me five rupees ? He says : ‘ *Garib admi*,’ of course, an’ would say it if he was as rich as banker. But if you send a half a dozen swords at him and shift the thatch off of his roof, he’ll pay. Guv’ment can’t do that. I don’t suppose it could. There is no reason why it shouldn’t. But it might do something like it to show that it wasn’t going to have no nonsense. Why, I’d undertake to raise a hundred million—what am I talking of?—a hundred and fifty million pounds from this country *per annum*, and it wouldn’t be strained *then*. One hundred and fifty millions you could raise as easy as paint, if you just made these ’ere Injians; understand that they had to pay an’ make no bones about it. It’s enough to make a man sick to go in over yonder to—— and see what they do ; and then come back an’ see what we do. Perfectly sickenin’ it is. Borrer money ? Why the country could pay herself an’ everything she wants, if she was only made to do it. It’s this bloomin’ *Garib admi* swindle that’s been going on all these years, that has made fools o’ the Guv’ment.”

Then he became egotistical, this ragged ruffian who conceived that he knew the road to illimitable wealth and told the story of his



life, interspersed with anecdotes that would blister the paper they were written on. But through all his ravings, he stuck to his hundred-and-fifty-million theory, and though the listener dissented from him and the brutal cruelty with which his views were stated, an unscientific impression remained not to be shaken off. Across the Border one feels that the country is being used, exploited, "made to sit up," so to speak. In our territories the feeling is equally strong of wealth "just round the corner," as the loafer said, of a people wrapped up in cotton wool and ungetatable. Will any man, who really knows something of a little piece of India and has not the fear of running counter to custom before his eyes, explain how this impression is produced, and why it is an erroneous one?

Nasirabad marked the end of the Englishman's holiday, and there was sorrow in his heart. "Come back again," said Ram Baksh, cheerfully, "and bring a gun with you. Then I'll take you to Gungra, and I'll drive you myself. 'Drive you just as well as I've driven these four days past.'" An amicable open-minded soul was Ram Baksh. May his tongas never grow less!

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"This 'ere Burma fever is a bad thing to have. It's pulled me down awful; an' now I am going to Peshawar. Are you the Station-master?" It was Thomas—white-cheeked, sunken-eyed, drawn-mouthed Thomas—travel-



ing from Nasirabad to Peshawar on pass; and with him was a Corporal new to his stripes and doing station duty. Every Thomas is interesting, except when he is too drunk to speak. This Thomas was an enthusiast. He had volunteered, from a Home-going regiment shattered by Burma fever, into a regiment at Peshawar, had broken down at Nasirabad on his way up with his draft, and was now journeying into the unknown to pick up another medal. "There's sure to be something on the Frontier," said this gaunt, haggard boy—he was little more, though he reckoned four years' service and considered himself somebody. "When there's anything going, Peshawar's the place to be in, they tell me; but I hear we shall have to march down to Calcutta in no time." The Corporal was a little man and showed his friend off with great pride: "Ah, you should have come to *us*," said he; "we're the regiment, we are." "Well, I went with the rest of our men," said Thomas. "There's three hundred of us volunteered to stay on, and we all went for the same regiment. Not but what I'm saying yours is a good regiment," he added with grave courtesy. This loosed the Corporal's tongue, and he descanted on the virtues of the regiment and the merits of the officers. It has been written that Thomas is devoid of *esprit de corps*, because of the jerkiness of the arrangements under which he now serves. If this be true, he manages to conceal his feelings very well;

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for he speaks most fluently in praise of his own regiment; and, for all his youth, has a keen appreciation of the merits of his officers. Go to him when his heart is opened, and hear him going through the roll of the subalterns, by a grading totally unknown in the Army List, and you will pick up something worth the hearing. Thomas, with the Burma fever on him, tried to cut in, from time to time, with stories of his officers and what they had done "when we was marchin' all up and down Burma," but the little Corporal went on gaily.

They made a curious contrast—these two types. The lathy, town-bred Thomas with hock-bottle shoulders, a little education, and a keen desire to get more medals and stripes; and the little, deep-chested, bull-necked Corporal brimming over with vitality and devoid of any ideas beyond the "regiment." And the end of both lives, in all likelihood, would be a nameless grave in some cantonment burying-ground with, if the case were specially interesting and the Regimental Doctor had a turn for the pen, an obituary notice in the Indian Medical Journal. It was an unpleasant thought.

From the Army to the Navy is a perfectly natural transition, but one hardly to be expected in the heart of India. Dawn showed the railway carriage full of riotous boys, for the Agra and Mount Abu schools had broken up for holidays. Surely it was natural

enough to ask a child—not a boy, but a child—whether he was going home for the holidays ; and surely it was a crushing, a petrifying thing to hear in a clear treble tinged with icy scorn : “ No. I’m on leave. I’m a midshipman.” Two “ officers of Her Majesty’s Navy ”—mids of a man-o’-war at Bombay—were going up-country on ten days’ leave. They had not traveled much more than twice round the world ; but they should have printed the fact on a label. They chattered like daws, and their talk was as a whiff of fresh air from the open sea, while the train ran eastward under the Aravalis. At that hour their lives were bound up in and made glorious by the hope of riding a horse when they reached their journey’s end. Much had they seen “ cities and men,” and the artless way in which they interlarded their conversation with allusions to “ one of those shore-going chaps, you see,” was delicious. They had no cares, no fears, no servants, and an unlimited stock of wonder and admiration for everything they saw, from the “ cute little well scoops ” to a herd of deer grazing on the horizon. It was not until they had opened their young hearts with infantile abandon that the listener could guess from the incidental *argot* where these pocket-Ulysseses had traveled. South African, Norwegian, and Arabian words were used to help out the slang of shipboard, and a copious vocabulary of shipboard terms, complicated with modern Greek. As free from self-conscious-

ness as children, as ignorant as beings from another planet of the Anglo-Indian life into which they were going to dip for a few days, shrewd and observant as befits men of the world who have authority, and neat handed and resourceful as—blue-jackets, they were a delightful study, and accepted freely and frankly the elaborate apologies tendered to them for the unfortunate mistake about the “holidays.” The roads divided and they went their way; and there was a shadow after they had gone, for the Globe-trotter said to his wife, “What I like about Jeypore”—accent on the first syllable, if you please—“is its characteristic easternness.” And the Globe-trotter’s wife said; “Yes. It is purely Oriental.”

This was Jeypore with the gas-jets and the water pipes as was shown at the beginning of these trivial letters; and the Globe-trotter and his wife had not been to Amber. Joyful thought! They had not seen the soft splendors of Udaipur, the nightmare of Chitor, the grim power of Jodhpur, and the virgin beauties of Boondi—fairest of all places that the Englishman had set eyes on. The Globe-trotter was great in the matter of hotels and food, but he had not lain under the shadow of a tonga in soft warm sand, eating cold pork with a pocket-knife, and thanking Providence who put sweet-water streams where wayfarers wanted them. He had not drunk out the brilliant cold-weather night in the company of a King of Loafers, a grimy scallawag with

a six days' beard and an unholy knowledge of native States. He had attended service in cantonment churches; but he had not known what it was to witness the simple, solemn ceremonial in the dining-room of a far-away Residency, when all the English folk within a hundred-mile circuit bowed their heads before the God of the Christians. He had blundered about temples of strange deities with a guide at his elbow; but he had not known what it was to attempt conversation with a temple dancing-girl (*not* such an one as Edwin Arnold invented), and to be rewarded for a misturned compliment with a deftly heaved bunch of marigold buds in his respectable bosom. Yet he had undoubtedly lost much, and the measure of his loss was proven in his estimate of the Orientalism of Jeypore.

But what had he who sat in judgment upon him gained? One perfect month of loaferdom, to be remembered above all others and the night of the visit to Chitor, to be remembered even when the month is forgotten. Also the sad knowledge that of all the fair things seen, the inept pen gives but a feeble and blurred picture.

Let those who have read to the end, pardon a hundred blemishes.



# THE SMITH ADMINISTRATION





# THE SMITH ADMINISTRATION

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## THE COW-HOUSE JIRGA

How does a King feel when he has kept peace in his borders, by skilfully playing off people against people, sect against sect, and kin against kin? Does he go out into the back veranda, take off his terai-crown, and rub his hands softly, chuckling the while—as I do now? Does he pat himself on the back and hum merry little tunes as he walks up and down his garden? A man who takes no delight in ruling men—dozens of them—is no man. Behold! India has been squabbling over the Great Cow Question any time these four hundred years, to the certain knowledge of history and successive governments. I, Smith, have settled it. That is all!

The trouble began, in the ancient and well-established fashion, with a love-affair across the Border, that is to say, in the next compound. Peroo, the cowboy, went a-courting, and the innocent had not sense enough to keep to his own creed. He must needs make love to Baktawri, Corkler's *coachwan's* (coachman) little girl, and she being betrothed to

Ahmed Buksh's son, *ætat* nine, very properly threw a cow-dung cake at his head. Peroo scrambled back, hot and disheveled, over the garden wall, and the vendetta began. Peroo is in no sense chivalrous. He saved Chukki, the *ayah's* (maid) little daughter, from a big pariah dog once; but he made Chukki give him half a *chapatti* for his services, and Chukki cried horribly. Peroo threw bricks at Baktawri when next he saw her, and said shameful things about her birth and parentage. "If she be not fair to me, I will heave a rock at she," was Peroo's rule of life after the cow-dung incident. Baktawri naturally objected to bricks, and she told her father.

Without, in the least, wishing to hurt Corkler's feelings, I must put on record my opinion that his *coachwan* is a *chamar*-Mahometan, not too long converted. The lines on which he fought the quarrel lead me to this belief, for he made a Creed-question of the brick-throwing, instead of waiting for Peroo and smacking that young cateran when he caught him. Once beyond my borders, my people carry their lives in their own hand—the Government is not responsible for their safety. Corkler's *coachwan* did not complain to me. He sent out an Army—Imam Din, his son—with general instructions to do Peroo a mischief in the eyes of his employer. This brought the fight officially under my cognizance; and was a direct breach of the neutrality existing between myself and Corkler, who

has "Punjab head," and declares that his servants are the best in the Province. I know better. They are the tailings of my compound—"casters" for dishonesty and riotousness. As an Army, Imam Din was distinctly inexperienced. As a General, he was beneath contempt. He came in the night with a hoe, and chipped a piece out of the dun heifer,—Peroo's charge,—fondly imagining that Peroo would have to bear the blame. Peroo was discovered next morning weeping salt tears into the wound, and the mass of my Hindu population were at once up and in arms. Had I headed them, they would have descended upon Corkler's compound and swept it off the face of the earth. But I calmed them with fair words and set a watch for the cow-hoer. Next night, Imam Din came again with a bamboo and began to hit the heifer over her legs. Peroo caught him—caught him by the leg—and held on for the dear vengeance, till Imam Din was locked up in the gram go-down, and Peroo told him that he would be led out to death in the morning. But with the dawn, the Clan Corkler came over, and there was pulling of turbans across the wall, till the Supreme Government was dressed and said, "Be silent!" Now Corkler's *coachwan's* brother was my *coachwan*, and a man much dreaded by Peroo. He was not unaccustomed to speak the truth at intervals, and, by virtue of that rare failing, I, the Supreme Government, appointed him head of the *jirga*

(committee) to try the case of Peroo's unauthorized love-making. The other members were my bearer (Hindu), Corkler's bearer (Mahometan), with the *ticca-dharzi* (hired tailor), Mahometan, for Standing Counsel. Baktawri and Baktawri's father were witnesses, but Baktawri's mother came all unasked and seriously interfered with the gravity of the debate by abuse. But the *dharzi* upheld the dignity of the Law, and led Peroo away by the ear to a secluded spot near the well.

Imam Din's case was an offense against the Government, raiding in British territory and maiming of cattle, complicated with trespass by night—all heinous crimes for which he might have been sent to jail. The evidence was deadly conclusive, and the case was tried summarily in the presence of the heifer. Imam Din's counsel was Corkler's *sais*, who, with great acumen, pointed out that the boy had only acted under his father's instructions. Pressed by the Supreme Government, he admitted that the letters of marque did not specify cows as an object of revenge, but merely Peroo. The hoeing of a heifer was a piece of spite on Imam Din's part. This was admitted. The penalties of failure are dire. A *chowkidar* (watchman) was deputed to do justice on the person of Imam Din, but sentence was deferred pending the decision of the *jirga* on Peroo. The *dharzi* announced to the Supreme Government that Peroo had been

found guilty of assaulting Baktawri, across the Border in Corkler's compound, with bricks, thereby injuring the honor and dignity of Corkler's *coachwan*. For this offense, the *jirga* submitted, a sentence of a dozen stripes was necessary, to be followed by two hours of ear-holding. The Corkler *chowkidar* was deputed to do sentence on the person of Peroo, and the Smith *chowkidar* on that of Imam Din. They laid on together with justice and discrimination, and seldom have two small boys been better trounced. Followed next a dreary interval of "ear-holding" side by side. This is a peculiar Oriental punishment, and should be seen to be appreciated. The Supreme Government then called for Corkler's *coachwan* and pointed out the bleeding heifer, with such language as seemed suitable to the situation. Local knowledge in a case like this is invaluable. Corkler's *coachwan* was notoriously a wealthy man, and so far a bad Mussulman in that he lent money at interest. As a financier he had few friends among his co-servants. On the other hand, in the Smith quarters, the Mahometan element largely predominated; because the Supreme Government considered the minds of Mahometans more get-at-able than those of Hindus. The sin of inciting an illiterate and fanatic family to go forth and do a mischief was duly dwelt upon by the Supreme Government, together with the dangers attending the vicarious *jehad* (religious war). Corkler's *coachwan*

offered no defense beyond the general statement that the Supreme Government was his father and his mother. This carried no weight. The Supreme Government touched lightly on the inexpediency of reviving an old creed-quarrel, and pointed out a venture, that the birth and education of a *chamar* (low-caste Hindu), three months converted, did not justify such extreme sectarianism. Here the populace shouted like the men of Ephesus, and sentence was passed amid tumultuous applause. Corkler's *coachwan* was ordered to give a dinner, not only to the Hindus whom he had insulted, but also to the Mahometans of the Smith compound, and also to his own fellow-servants. His brother, the Smith *coachwan*, unconverted *chamar*, was to see that he did it. Refusal to comply with these words entailed a reference to Corkler and the "Inspector Sahib," who would send in his constables, and, with the connivance of the Supreme Government, would harry and vex all the Corkler compound. Corkler's *coachwan* protested, but was overborne by Hindus and Mahometans alike, and his brother, who hated him with a cordial hatred, began to discuss the arrangements for the dinner. Peroo, by the way, was not to share in the feast, nor was Imam Din. The proceedings then terminated, and the Supreme Government went in to breakfast.

Ten days later the dinner came off and was continued far into the night. It marked a

new era in my political relations with the outlying states, and was graced for a few minutes by the presence of the Supreme Government. Corkler's *coachwan* hates me bitterly, but he can find no one to back him up in any scheme of annoyance that he may mature; for have I not won for my Empire a free dinner, with oceans of sweetmeats? And in this, gentlemen all, lies the secret of Oriental administration. My throne is set where it should be—on the stomachs of many people.

## A BAZAAR DHULIP.

I AND the Government are roughly in the same condition; but modesty forces me to say that the Smith Administration is a few points better than the Imperial. Corkler's *coachwan*, you may remember, was fined a caste-dinner by me for sending his son, Imam Din, to mangle my dun heifer. In my last published administration report, I stated that Corkler's *coachwan* bore me a grudge for the fine imposed upon him, but among my servants and Corkler's, at least, could find no one to support him in schemes of vengeance. I was quite right—right as an administration with prestige to support should always be.

But I own that I had never contemplated the possibility of Corkler's *coachwan* going off to take service with Mr. Jehan Concepcion Fernandez de Lisboa Paul—a gentleman semi-orientalized, possessed of several dwelling-houses and an infamous temper. Corkler was an Englishman, and any attempt on his *coachwan's* part to annoy me would have been summarily stopped. Mr. J. C. F. de L. Paul, on the other hand . . . but no matter. The business is now settled, and there is no necessity for importing a race-question into the story.

Once established in Mr. Paul's compound,



Corkler's *coachwan* sent me an insolent message demanding a refund, with interest, of all the money spent on the caste-dinner. The Government, in a temperately framed reply, refused point-blank, and pointed out that a Mahometan by his religion could not ask for interest. As I have stated in my last report, Corkler's *coachwan* was a renegade *chamar*, converted to Islam for his wife's sake. The impassive attitude of the Government had the effect of monstrously irritating Corkler's *coachwan*, who sat on the wall of Mr. Paul's compound and flung highly flavored vernacular at the servants of the State as they passed. He said that it was his intention to make life a burden to the Government—profanely called Eschmitt Sahib. The Government went to office as usual and made no sign. Then Corkler's *coachwan* formulated an indictment to the effect that Eschmitt Sahib had, on the occasion of the caste-dinner, pulled him vehemently by the ears, and robbed him of one rupee nine annas four pie. The charge was shouted from the top of Mr. Paul's compound wall to the four winds of Heaven. It was disregarded by the Government, and the refugee took more daring measures. He came by night, and wrote upon the white-washed walls with charcoal disgraceful sentences which made the Smith servants grin.

Now it is bad for any Government that its servants should grin at it. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft; and irreverence is the parent

of rebellion. Not content with writing, Corkler's *coachwan* began to miscall the State—always from the top of Mr. Paul's wall. He informed intending *mussalchis* (scullions) that Eschmitt Sahib invariably administered his pantry with a polo-stock; possible *saises* (grooms) were told that wages in the Smith establishment were paid yearly; while *khit-matgars* (butlers) learnt that their family honor was not safe within the gate-posts of the house of "Eschmitt." No real harm was done, for the character of my rule is known among all first-class servants. Still, the vituperation and all its circumstantial details made men laugh; and I choose that no one shall laugh.

My relations with Mr. Paul had always—for reasons connected with the incursions of hens—been strained. In pursuance of a carefully matured plan of campaign I demanded of Mr. Paul the body of Corkler's *coachwan*, to be dealt with after my own ideas. Mr. Paul said that the man was a good *coachwan* and should not be given up. I then temperately—always temperately—gave him a sketch of the ruffian's conduct. Mr. Paul announced his entire freedom from any responsibility in this matter, and requested that the correspondence might cease. It was vitally necessary to the well-being of my administration that Corkler's *coachwan* should come into my possession. He was daily growing a greater nuisance, and had drawn unto him a disaffected dog-boy, lately in my employ.

Mr. Paul was deaf to my verbal, and blind to my written entreaties. For these reasons I was reluctantly compelled to take the law into my own hands—and break it. A *khitmatgar* was sent down the length of Mr. Paul's wall to "draw the fire" of Corkler's *coachwan*, and while the latter cursed him by his gods for ever entering Eschmitt Sahib's service, Eschmitt Sahib crept subtilely behind the wall and thrust the evil-speaker into the moonlit road, where he was pinioned, in strict silence, by the ambushed population of the Smith compound. Once collared, I regret to say, Corkler's *coachwan* was seized with an unmanly panic; for the memory of the lewd sentences on the wall, the insults shouted from the top of Mr. Paul's wall, and the warnings to way-faring table-servants, came back to his mind. He wept salt tears and demanded the protection of the law and of Mr. Paul. He received neither. He was paraded by the State through the quarters, that all men and women and little children might look at him. He was then formally appointed last and lowest of the carriage-grooms — *nauker-ke-nauker* (servant of servants)—in perpetuity, on a salary which would never be increased. The entire Smith people—Hindu and Mussulman alike—were made responsible for his safe-keeping under pain of having all the thatch additions to their houses torn down, and the Light of the Favor of the State—the Great *Hazur-ki-Mehrbani*—darkened forever.

Legally the State was wrongfully detaining Corkler's *coachwan*. Practically, it was avenging itself for a protracted series of insults to its dignity.

Days rolled on, and Corkler's *coachwan* became carriage-*sais*. Instead of driving two horses, it was his duty to let down the steps for the State to tread upon. When the other servants received cold-weather coats, he was compelled to buy one, and all extra lean-to huts round his house were strictly forbidden. That he did not run away, I ascribe solely to the exertions of the domestic police—that is to say, every man, woman, and child of the Smith Kingdom. He was delivered into their hands, for a prey and a laughing-stock; and in their hands, unless I am much mistaken, they intend that he shall remain. I learn that my *khansamah* (head-butler) has informed Mr. Paul that his late servant is in jail for robbing the Roman Catholic Chapel, of which Mr. Paul is a distinguished member; consequently that gentleman had relaxed his attempts to unearth what he called his “so good *coachwan*.” That *coachwan* is now a living example and most lively presentment of the unrelaxing wrath of the State. However well he may work, however earnestly strive to win my favor, there is no human chance of his ever rising from his present position so long as Eschmitt Sahib and he are above the earth together. For reasons which I have hinted at above, he remains cleaning carriage-wheels,

and will so remain to the end of the chapter ; while the story of his fall and fate spreads through the bazaars, and fills the ranks of servanthood with an intense respect for Eschmitt Sahib.

A broad-minded Oriental administration would have allowed me to nail up the head of Corkler's *coachwan* over the hall door ; a narrow-souled public may consider my present lenient treatment of him harsh and illegal. To this I can only reply that I know how to deal with my own people. I will never, never part with Corkler's *coachwan*.

## THE HANDS OF JUSTICE.

BE pleased to listen to a story of domestic trouble connected with the Private Services Commission in the back veranda, which did good work, though I, the Commission, say so, but it could not guard against the Unforeseen Contingency. There was peace in all my borders till Peroo, the cow-keeper's son, came yesterday and paralyzed the Government. He said his father had told him to gather sticks—dry sticks—for the evening fire. I would not check parental authority in any way, but I did not see why Peroo should mangle my *sirris*-trees. Peroo wept copiously, and, promising never to despoil my garden again, fled from my presence.

To-day I have caught him in the act of theft, and in the third fork of the white Doon *sirris*, twenty feet above ground. I have taken a chair and established myself at the foot of the tree, preparatory to making up my mind.

The situation is a serious one, for if Peroo be led to think that he can break down my trees unharmed, the garden will be a wilderness in a week. Furthermore, Peroo has insulted the Majesty of the Government. Which is Me. Also he has insulted my *sirris* in say-

ing that it is dry. He deserves a double punishment.

On the other hand, Peroo is very young, very small, and very, very naked. At present he is penitent, for he is howling in a dry and husky fashion, and the squirrels are frightened.

The question is—how shall I capture Peroo? There are three courses open to me. I can shin up the tree and fight him on his own ground. I can shell him with clods of earth till he makes submission and comes down; or, and this seems the better plan, I can remain where I am, and cut him off from his supplies until the rifles—sticks I mean—are returned.

Peroo, for all practical purposes, is a marauding tribe from the Hills—head-man, fighting-tail and all. I, once more, am the State, cool, collected, and impassive. In half an hour or so Peroo will be forced to descend. He will then be smacked: that is, if I can lay hold of his wriggling body. In the mean time, I will demonstrate.

“Bearer, bring me the *tum-tum ki chabug* (carriage-whip).”

It is brought and laid on the ground, while Peroo howls afresh. I will overawe this child. He has an armful of stolen sticks pressed to his stomach.

“Bearer, bring also the *chota mota chabug* (the little whip) the one kept for the *punnia culia* (spaniel).”

Peroo has stopped howling. He peers through the branches and breathes through

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his nose very hard. Decidedly, I am impressing him with a show of armed strength. The idea of that cruel whip-thong curling round Peroo's fat little brown stomach is not a pleasant one. But I must be firm.

"Peroo, come down and be hit for stealing the Sahib's wood."

Peroo scuttles up to the fourth fork, and waits developments.

"Peroo, will you come down?"

"No. The Sahib will hit me."

Here the *goalla* appears, and learns that his son is in disgrace. "Beat him well, Sahib," says the *goalla*. "He is a *budmash*. I never told him to steal your wood. Peroo, descend and be very much beaten."

There is silence for a moment. Then, crisp and clear from the very top of the *sirris*, float down the answer of the treed dacoit.

"*Kubbi, kubbi nahin* (Never—never—No!)."

The *goalla* hides a smile with his hand and departs, saying: "Very well. This night I will beat you dead."

There is a rustle in the leaves as Peroo wriggles himself into a more comfortable seat.

"Shall I send a *punkha-coolie* after him?" suggests the bearer.

This is not good. Peroo might fall and hurt himself. Besides I have no desire to employ native troops. They demand too much *batta*. The *punkha-coolie* would expect



four annas for capturing Peroo. I will deal with the robber myself. He shall be treated judicially, when the excitement of wrong-doing shall have died away, as befits his tender years, with an old bedroom slipper, and the bearer shall hold him. Yes, he shall be smacked three times,—once gently, once moderately, and once severely. After the punishment shall come the fine. He shall help the malli (gardener) to keep the flower-beds in order for a week, and then—

“ Sahib ! Sahib ! Can I come down ? ”

The rebel treats for terms.

“ Peroo, you are a *nut cut* (a young imp). ”

“ It was my father’s order. He told me to get sticks. ”

‘ From this tree ? ’

“ Yes ; Protector of the Poor. He said the Sahib would not come back from office till I had gathered many sticks. ”

“ Your father didn’t tell me that. ”

“ My father is a liar. Sahib ! Sahib ! Are you going to hit me ? ”

“ Come down and I’ll think about it. ”

Peroo drops as far as the third fork, sees the whips, and hesitates.

“ If you will take away the whips I will come down. ”

There is a frankness in this negotiation that I respect. I stoop, pick up the whips, and turn to throw them into the verandah.

Follows a rustle, a sound of scraped bark,

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and a thud. When I turn, Peroo is down, off and over the compound wall. He has not dropped the stolen fire-wood, and I feel distinctly foolish.

My prestige, so far as Peroo is concerned, is gone.

This Administration will now go indoors for a drink.

## THE SERAI CABAL.

UPON the evidence of a scullion, I, the State, rose up and made sudden investigation of the crowded *serai*. There I found and dismissed, as harmful to public morals, a lady in a pink *saree* who was masquerading as somebody's wife. The utter and abject loneliness of the *mussalchi*, that outcast of the cookroom, should, Orientally speaking, have led him to make a favorable report to his fellow-servants. That he did not do so I attributed to a certain hardness of character brought out by innumerable kickings and scanty fare. Therefore I acted on his evidence and, in so doing, brought down the wrath of the entire *serai*, not on my head,—for they were afraid of me,—but on the humble head of Karim Baksh, *mussalchi*. He had accused the bearer of inaccuracy in money matters, and the *khansamah* of idleness; besides bringing about the ejectment of fifteen people—men, women, and children—related by holy and unholy ties to all the servants. Can you wonder that Karim Baksh was a marked boy? Departmentally, he was under the control of the *khansamah*, I myself taking but small interest in the subordinate appointments on my staff. Two days after the evidence had been tendered, I was not surprised

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to learn that Karim Baksh had been dismissed by his superior ; reason given, that he was personally unclean. It is a fundamental maxim of my administration that all power delegated is liable to sudden and unexpected resumption at the hands of the Head. This prevents the right of the Lord-Proprietor from lapsing by time. The *khansamah's* decision was reversed without reason given, and the enemies of Karim Baksh sustained their first defeat. They were bold in making their first move so soon. I, Smith, who devote hours that would be better spent on honest money-getting, to the study of my servants, knew they would now try less direct tactics. Karim Baksh slept soundly, over against the drain that carries off the water of my bath, as the enemy conspired.

One night I was walking round the house when the pungent stench of a *hookah* drifted out of the pantry. A *hookah*, out of place, is to me an abomination. I removed it gingerly, and demanded the name of the owner. Out of the darkness sprang a man, who said, "Karim Baksh !" It was the bearer. Running my hand along the stem, I felt the loop of leather which a *chamar* attaches, or should attach, to his pipe, lest higher castes be defiled unwittingly. The bearer lied, for the burning *hookah* was a device of the groom—friend of the lady in the pink *saree*—to compass the downfall of Karim Baksh. So the second move of the enemy was foiled, and Karim

Baksh asleep as dogs sleep, by the drain, took no harm.

Came thirdly, after a decent interval to give me time to forget the Private Services Commission, the *gumnamah* (the anonymous letter)—stuck into the frame of the looking-glass. Karim Baksh had proposed an elopement with the sweeper's wife, and the morality of the *serai* was in danger. Also the sweeper threatened murder, which could be avoided by the dismissal of Karim Baksh. The blear-eyed orphan heard the charge against him unmoved, and, at the end, turning his face to the sun, said: "Look at me, Sahib! Am I the man a woman runs away with?" Then pointing to the *ayah*, "Or she the woman to tempt a Mussulman?" Low as was Karim Baksh, the *mussalchi*, he could by right of creed look down upon a she-sweeper. The charge under Section 498, I. P. C., broke down in silence and tears, and thus the third attempt of the enemy came to naught.

I, Smith, who have some knowledge of my subjects, knew that the next charge would be a genuine one, based on the weakness of Karim Baksh, which was clumsiness—phenomenal ineptitude of hand and foot. Nor was I disappointed. A fortnight passed, and the bearer and the *khansamah* simultaneously preferred charges against Karim Baksh. He had broken two tea-cups and had neglected to report their loss to me; the value of the tea-cups was four annas. They must have spent

days spying upon Karim Baksh, for he was a morose and solitary boy who did his cup-cleaning alone.

Taxed with the fragments, Karim Baksh attempted no defense. Things were as the witnesses said, and I was his father and his mother. By my rule, a servant who does not confess a fault suffers, when that fault is discovered, severe punishment. But the red *Hanuman*, who grins by the well in the bazaar, prompted the bearer at that moment to express his extreme solicitude for the honor and dignity of my service. Literally translated, the sentence ran, "The zeal of thy house has eaten me up."

Then an immense indignation and disgust took possession of me, Smith, who have trodden, as far as an Englishman may tread, the miry gulleys of native thought. I knew—none better—the peculations of the bearer, the vices of the *khansamah*, and the abject, fawning acquiescence with which these two men would meet the basest wish that my mind could conceive. And they talked to me—thieves and worse that they were—of their desire that I should be well served! Lied to me as though I had been a griff but twenty minutes landed on the Apollo Bunder! In the middle stood Karim Baksh, silent; on either side was an accuser, broken tea-cup in hand; the *khansamah*, mindful of the banished lady in the pink *saree*; the bearer remembering that, since the date of the Private Services Commission, the

whisky and the rupees had been locked up. And they talked of the shortcomings of Karim Baksh—the outcast—the boy too ugly to achieve and too stupid to conceive sin—a blunderer at the worst. Taking each accuser by the nape of his neck, I smote their cunning skulls the one against the other, till they saw stars by the firmamentful. Then I cast them from me, for I was sick of them, knowing how long they had worked in secret to compass the downfall of Karim Baksh.

And they laid their hands upon their mouths and were dumb, for they saw that I, Smith, knew to what end they had striven.

This Administration may not control a revenue of seventy-two millions, more or less, per annum, but it is wiser than—some people.

## THE STORY OF A KING.

IF there be any idle people who remember the campaign against Peroo, the cow-man's son, or retain any recollection of the great intrigue set afoot by all the servants against the scullion,—if, I say, there be any who bear in mind these notable episodes in my administration, I would pray their attention to what follows.

The *Gazette of India* shows that I have been absent for two months from the station in which is my house.

The day before I departed, I called the Empire together, from the bearer to the *sais'* friends' hanger-on, and it numbered, with wives and babes, thirty-seven souls—all well-fed, prosperous, and contented under my rule, which includes free phenyle and quinine. I made a speech—a long speech—to the listening peoples. I announced that the inestimable boon of local self-government was to be theirs for the next eight weeks. They said that it was “good talk.” I laid upon the Departments concerned the charge of my garden, my harness, my house, my horse, my guns, my furniture, all the screens in front of the doors, both cows, and the little calf that was to come. I charged them by their hope of presents in the future to act cleanly and



carefully by my chattels ; to abstain from fighting, and to keep the *serai* sweet. That this might be done under the eye of authority, I appointed a Viceroy—the very strong man Bahadur Khan, *khitmatgar* to wit—and, that he might have a material hold over his subjects, gave him an ounce-phial of cinchona febrifuge, to distribute against the fevers of September. Lastly—and of this I have never sufficiently repented—I gave all of them their two months' wages in advance. They were desperately poor some of them,—how poor only I and the money-lender knew,—but I repent still of my act. A rich democracy inevitably rots.

Eliminating that one financial error, could any man have done better than I? I know he could not, for I took a plebiscite of the Empire on the matter, and it said with one voice that my scheme was singularly right. On that assurance I left it and went to lighter pleasures.

On the fourth day came the *gumnameh*. In my heart of hearts I had expected one, but not so soon—oh, not so soon! It was on a postcard, and preferred serious accusations of neglect and immorality against Bahadur Khan, my Viceroy. I understood then the value of the anonymous letter. However much you despise it, it breeds distrust—especially when it arrives with every other mail. To my shame be it said I caused a watch to be set on Bahadur Khan, employing a tender Babu. But it was too late. An urgent private telegram

informed me : "Bahadur Khan secreted sweeper's daughter. House leaks." The head of my administration, the man with all the cinchona febrifuge, had proved untrustworthy, and—the house leaked. The agonies of managing an Empire from the Hills can only be appreciated by those who have made the experiment. Before I had been three weeks parted from my country, I was compelled, by force of circumstance, to rule it on paper, through a hireling executive—the Babu—totally incapable of understanding the wants of my people, and, in the nature of things, purely temporary. He had, at some portion of his career, been in a subordinate branch of the Secretariat. His training there had paralyzed him. Instead of taking steps when Bahadur Khan eloped with the sweeper's daughter, whom I could well have spared, and the cinchona febrifuge, which I knew would be wanted, he wrote me voluminous reports on both thefts. The leakage of the house he dismissed in one paragraph, merely stating that "much furniture had been swamped." I wrote to my landlord, a Hindu of the old school. He replied that he could do nothing so long as my servants piled cut fuel on the top of the houses, straining the woodwork of the verandas. Also, he said that the *bhisti* (water-carrier) refused to recognize his authority, or to sprinkle water on the road-metal which was then being laid down for the carriage drive. On this announcement came a letter from the Babu, in-

timating that bad fever had broken out in the *serai*, and that the servants falsely accused him of having bought the cinchona febrifuge of Bahadur Khan, ex-Viceroy, now political fugitive, for the purpose of vending retail. The fever and not the false charge interested me. I suggested—this by wire—that the Babu should buy quinine. In three days he wrote to know whether he should purchase common or Europe quinine, and whether I would repay him. I sent the quinine down by parcel post, and sighed for Bahadur Khan with all his faults. Had he only stayed to look after my people, I would have forgiven the affair of the sweeper's daughter. He was immoral, but an administrator, and would have done his best with the fever.

In course of time my leave came to an end, and I descended on my Empire, expecting the worst. Nor was I disappointed. In the first place, the horses had not been shod for two months; in the second, the garden had not been touched for the same space of time; in the third, the *serai* was unspeakably filthy; in the fourth, the house was inches deep in dust, and there were muddy stains on most of the furniture; in the fifth, the house had never been opened; in the sixth, seventeen of my people had gone away and two had died of fever; in the seventh, the little calf was dead. Eighthly and lastly, the remnant of my retainers were fighting furiously among themselves, clique against clique, creed against creed, and

woman against woman ; this last was the most overwhelming of all. It was a dreary homecoming. The Empire formed up two deep round the carriage and began to explain its grievances. It wept and recriminated and abused till it was dismissed. Next morning I discovered that its finances were in a most disorganized condition. It had borrowed money for a wedding, and to recoup itself had invented little bills of imaginary expenses contracted during my absence.

For three hours I executed judgment, and strove as best I could to repair a wasted, neglected, and desolate realm. By 4 P.M. the ship of state had been cleared of the greater part of the raffle, and its crew—to continue the metaphor—had beaten to quarters, united and obedient once more.

Though I knew the fault lay with Bahadur Khan—wicked, abandoned, but decisive and capable-of-ruling-men Bahadur Khan—I could not rid myself of the thought that I was wrong in leaving my people so long to their own devices.

But this was absurd. A man can't spend all his time looking after his servants, can he?

## THE GREAT CENSUS.

MOWGI was a *mehter* (a sweeper), but he was also a Punjabi, and consequently, had a head on his shoulders. Mowgi was my *mehter*—the property of Smith who governs a vast population of servants with unprecedented success. When he was my subject I did not appreciate him properly. I called him lazy and unclean ; I protested against the multitude of his family. Mowgi asked for his dismissal,—he was the only servant who ever voluntarily left the Shadow of my Protection,—and I said : “ O Mowgi, either you are an irreclaimable ruffian or a singularly self-reliant man. In either case you will come to great grief. Where do you intend to go ? ” “ God knows,” said Mowgi, cheerfully. “ I shall leave my wife and all the children here, and go somewhere else. If you, Sahib, turn them out, they will die ! For you are their only protector.”

So I was dowered with Mowgi's wife—wives rather, for he had forgotten the new one from Rawalpindi ; and Mowgi went out to the unknown, and never sent a single letter to his family. The wives used to clamor in the verandah and accuse me of having taken the remittances, which they said Mowgi must have sent, to help out my own pay.

When I supported them they were quite sure of the theft. For these reasons I was angry with the absent Mowgi.

Time passed, and I, the great Smith, went abroad on travels and left my Empire in Commission. The wives were the feudatory Native States, but the Commission could not make them recognize any feudal tie. They both got married, saying that Mowgi was a bad man, but they never left my compound.

In the course of my wanderings I came to the great Native State of Ghorahpur, which, as every one knows, is on the borders of the Indian Desert. None the less, it requires almost as many printed forms for its proper administration as a real district. Among its other peculiarities, it was proud of its prisoners—*kaidis* they were called. In the old days Ghorahpur was wont to run its dacoits through the stomach or cut them with swords; but now it prides itself on keeping them in leg-irons and employing them on "remunerative labor," that is to say, sitting in the sun by the side of a road and waiting until some road-metal comes and lays itself down.

A gang of *kaidis* was hard at work in this fashion when I came by, and the warder was picking his teeth with the end of his bayonet. One of the fettered sinners came forward and *salaamed* deeply to me. It was Mowgi,—fat, well fed, and with a twinkle in his eye. "Is the Presence in good health and are all in his house well?" said Mowgi. "What in the

world are you doing here?" demanded the Presence. "By your honor's favor I am in prison," said he, shaking one leg delicately to make the ankle-iron jingle on the leg-bar. "I have been in prison nearly a month."

"What for—dacoity?"

"I have been a Sahib's servant," said Mowgi, offended. "Do you think that I should ever become a low dacoit like these men here? I am in prison for making a numbering for the people."

"A what?" Mowgi grinned, and told the tale of his misdeeds thus:—

"When I left your service, Sahib, I went to Delhi, and from Delhi I came to the Sambhur Salt Lake over there!" He pointed across the sand. "I was a Jemadar of *mehters* (a headman of sweepers) there, because these Marwarri people are without sense. Then they gave me leave because they said I had stolen money. It was true, but I was also very glad to go away, for my legs were sore from the salt of the Sambhur Lake. I went away and hired a camel for twenty rupees a month. That was shameful talk, but these thieves of Marwarris would not let me have it for less."

"Where did you get the money from?" I asked.

"I have said that I had stolen it. I am a poor man. I could not get it by any other way."

"But what did you want with a camel?"

"The Sahib shall hear. In the house of a



certain Sahib at Sambhur was a big book which came from Bombay, and whenever the Sahib wanted anything to eat or good tobacco, he looked into the book and wrote a letter to Bombay, and in a week all the things came as he had ordered—soap and sugar and boots. I took that book; it was a fat one; and I shaved my moustache in the manner of Mahometans, and I got upon my camel and went away from that bad place of Sambhur.”

“Where did you go?”

“I cannot say. I went for four days over the sand till I was very far from Sambhur. Then I came to a village and said: ‘I am Wajib Ali, Bahadur, a servant of the Government, and many men are wanted to go and fight in Cabul. The order is written in this book. How many strong men have you?’ They were afraid because of my big book, and because they were without sense. They gave me food, and all the headmen gave me rupees to spare the men in that village, and I went away from there with nineteen rupees. The name of that village was Kot. And as I had done at Kot, so I did at other villages,—Waka, Tung, Malair, Palan, Myokal, and other places,—always getting rupees that the names of the strong young men might not be written down. I went from Bikanir to Jey-sulmir, till my book in which I always looked wisely so as to frighten the people, was back-broken, and I got one thousand seven hundred and eight rupees twelve annas and six pies.”



“All from a camel and a Treacher’s Price List?”

“I do not know the name of the book, but these people were very frightened of me. But I tried to take my *takkus* from a servant of this State, and he made a report, and they sent troopers, who caught me,—me, and my little camel, and my big book. Therefore I was sent to prison.”

“Mowgi,” said I, solemnly, “if this be true, you are a great man. When will you be out of prison?”

“In one year. I got three months for taking the numbering of the people, and one year for pretending to be a Mahometan. But I may run away before. All these people are very stupid men.”

“My arms, Mowgi,” I said, “will be open to you when the term of your captivity is ended. You shall be my body-servant.”

“The Presence is my father and my mother,” said Mowgi. “I will come.”

“The wives have married, Mowgi,” I said.

“No matter,” said Mowgi. “I also have a wife at Sambhur and one here. When I return to the service of the Presence, which one shall I bring?”

“Which one you please.”

“The Presence is my protection and a son of the gods,” said Mowgi. “Without doubt I will come as soon as I can escape.”

I am waiting now for the return of Mowgi. I will make him overseer of all my house.

## THE KILLING OF HATIM TAI

Now *Hatim Tai* was condemned to death by the Government, because he had stepped upon his *mahout*, broken his near-hind leg-chain, and punched poor old pursy *Durga Pershad* in the ribs till that venerable beast squealed for mercy. *Hatim Tai* was dangerous to the community, and the *mahout's* widow said that her husband's soul would never rest till *Hatim's* little, piglike eye was glazed in the frost of death. Did *Hatim* care? Not he. He trumpeted as he swung at his pickets, and he stole as much of *Durga Pershad's* food as he could. Then he went to sleep and looked that "all the to-morrows should be as to-day," and that he should never carry loads again. But the minions of the Law did not sleep. They came by night and scanned the huge bulk of *Hatim Tai*, and took council together how he might best be slain.

"If we borrowed a seven-pounder," began the Subaltern, "or, better still, if we turned him loose and had the Horse Battery out! A general inspection would be nothing to it! I wonder whether my Major would see it?"

"Skittles," said all the Doctors together. "He's *our* property." They severally murmured, "arsenic," "strychnine," and

“opium,” and went their way, while *Hatim Tai* dreamed of elephant loves, wooed and won long ago in the Doon. The day broke, and savage *mahouts*, led him away to the place of execution ; for he was quiet, being “fey,” as are both men and beasts when they approach the brink of the grave unknowing. “Ha, *Salah !* Ha, *Budmash !* To-day you die !” shouted the *mahouts*, “and Mangli’s ghost will rode you with an *ankus* heated in the flames of *Put*, O murderer and tun-bellied thief.” “A long journey,” thought *Hatim Tai*. “’Wonder what they’ll do at the end of it.” He broke off the branch of a tree and tickled himself on his jowl and ears. And so he walked into the place of execution, where men waited with many chains and grievous ropes, and bound him as he had never been bound before.

“Foolish people !” said *Hatim Tai*. “Almost as foolish as Mangli when he called me—the pride of all the Doon, the brightest jewel in Sanderson Sahib’s crown—a ‘base-born.’ I shall break these ropes in a minute or two, and then, between my fore and hind legs, some one is like to be hurt.”

“How much d’you think he’ll want ?” said the first Doctor. “About two ounces,” answered the second. “Say three to be on the safe side,” said the first ; and they did up the three ounces of arsenic in a ball of sugar. “Before a fight it is best to eat,” said *Hatim Tai*, and he put away the *gur* with a *salaam* ;

for he prided himself upon his manners. The men fell back, and *Hatim Tai* was conscious of grateful warmth in his stomach. "Bless their innocence!" thought he. "They've given me a *mussala*. I don't think I want it; but I'll show that I'm not ungrateful."

And he did! The chains and the ropes held firm. "It's beginning to work," said a Doctor. "Nonsense," said the Subaltern. "I know old *Hatim's* ways. He's lost his temper. If the ropes break we're done for."

*Hatim* kicked and wriggled and squealed and did his best, so far as his anatomy allowed, to buck-jump; but the ropes stretched not one inch.

"I am making a fool of myself," he trumpeted. "I must be calm. At seventy years of age one should behave with dignity. None the less, these ropes are excessively galling." He ceased his struggles, and rocked to and fro sulkily. "He is going to fall!" whispered a Doctor. "Not a bit of it. Now it's my turn. We'll try the strychnine," said the second.

Prick a large and healthy tiger with a corking-pin, and you will, in some small measure, realize the difficulty of injecting strychnine subcutaneously into an elephant nine feet eleven inches and one-half at the shoulder. *Hatim Tai* forgot his dignity and stood on his head, while all the world wondered. "I told you that would fetch him!" shouted the apostle

of strychnine, waving an enormous bottle. "That's the death-rattle! Stand back all!"

But it was only *Hatim Tai* expressing his regret that he had slain Mangli, and so fallen into the hands of the most incompetent *ma-houts* that he had ever made string-stirrups. "I was never jabbed with an *ankus* all over my body before; and I *won't* stand it!" blared *Hatim Tai*. He stood upon his head afresh and kicked. "Final convulsion," said the Doctor, just as *Hatim Tai* grew weary and settled into peace again. After all, it was not worth behaving like a baby. He would be calm. He was calm for two hours, and the Doctors looked at their watches and yawned.

"Now it's my turn," said the third Doctor. "*Afim lao*." They brought it—a knob of Patna opium of the purest; in weight half a seer. *Hatim* swallowed it whole. Ghazipur excise opium, two cakes of a seer each, followed, helped down with much *gur*. "This is good," said *Hatim Tai*. "They are sorry for their rudeness. Give me some more."

The hours wore on, and the sun began to sink, but not so *Hatim Tai*. The three Doctors cast professional rivalry to the winds and united in ravaging their dispensaries in *Hatim Tai's* behalf. Cyanide of potassium amused him. Bisulphide of mercury, chloral (very little of that), sulphate of copper, oxide of zinc, red lead, bismuth, carbonate of baryta, corrosive sublimate, quicklime, stramonium,

veratrium, colchicum, muriatic acid, and lunar caustic, all went down, one after another, in the balls of sugar ; and *Hatim Tai* never blenched.

It was not until the Hospital Assistant clamored : " All these things Government Store and Medical Comforts," that the Doctors desisted and wiped their heated brows. "' Might as well physic a Cairo sarcophagus," grumbled the first Doctor, and *Hatim Tai* gurgled gently ; meaning that he would like another *gur-ball*.

" Bless my soul !" said the Subaltern, who had gone away, done a day's work, and returned with his pet eight-bore. " D'you mean to say that you haven't killed *Hatim Tai* yet—three of you ? Most unprofessional, I call it. You could have polished off a battery in that time." " Battery !" shrieked the baffled medicos in chorus. " He's got enough poison in his system to settle the whole blessed British Army !"

" Let me try," said the Subaltern, unstrapping the gun-case in his dog-cart. He threw a handkerchief upon the ground, and passed quickly in front of the elephant. *Hatim Tai* lowered his head slightly to look, and even as he did so the spherical shell smote him on the " Saucer of Life"—the little spot no bigger than a man's hand which is six inches above a line drawn from eye to eye. " This is the end," said *Hatim Tai*. " I die as *Niwaz Jung* died !" He strove to keep his feet,

staggered, recovered, and reeled afresh. Then, with one wild trumpet that rang far through the twilight, *Hatim Tai* fell dead among his pickets.

"Might ha' saved half your dispensaries if you'd called me in to treat him at first," said the Subaltern, wiping out the eight-bore.

## A SELF-MADE MAN.

SURJUN came back from Kimberley, which is Tom Tiddler's Ground, where he had been picking up gold and silver. He was no longer a Purbeah. A real diamond ring sparkled on his hand, and his tweed suit had cost him forty-two shillings and sixpence. He paid two hundred pounds into the Bank; and it was there that I caught him and treated him as befitted a rich man. "O Surjun, come to my house and tell me your story."

Nothing loath, Surjun came—diamond ring and all. His speech was composite. When he wished to be impressive, he spoke English checkered with the Low Dutch slang of the Diamond Fields. When he would be expressive, he returned to his vernacular, and was as native as a gentleman with sixteen and six-penny boots could be.

"I will tell you my tale," said Surjun, displaying the diamond ring. "There was a friend of mine, and he went to Kimberley, and was a firm there selling things to the digger-men. In thirteen years he made seven thousand pounds. He came to me—I was from Chyebassa in those days—and said, 'Come into my firm.' I went with him. Oh no! I was not an emigrant. I took my own ship, and we became the firm of Surjun and Jagesser. Here is the card of my firm. You



can read it: 'Surjun and Jagesser Dubé, De Beer's Terrace, De Beer's Fields, Kimberley. We made an iron house,—all the houses are iron there,—and we sold, to the diggers and the Kaffirs and all sorts of men, clothes, flour, mealies, that is Indian corn, sardines and milk, and salmon in tins, and boots, and blankets, and clothes just as good as the clothes as I wear now.

"Kimberley is a good place. There are no pennies there—what you call *pice*—except to buy stamps with. Threepence is the smallest piece of money, and even threepence will not buy a drink. A drink is one shilling, one shilling and threepence, or one shilling and ninepence. And even the water there, it is one shilling and threepence for a hundred gallons in Kimberley. All things you get you pay money for. Yes, this diamond ring cost much money. Here is the bill, and there is the receipt stamp upon the bill—'Behrendt of Dutoitspan Road.' It is written upon the bill, and the price was thirteen pounds four shillings. It is a good diamond—Cape diamond. That is why the color is a little, little soft yellow. All Cape diamonds are so.

"How did I get my money? 'Fore Gott, I cannot tell, Sahib. You sell one day, you sell the other day, and all the other days—give the thing and take the money—the money comes. If we know man very well, we give credit one week, and if very, very well, so much as one month. You buy boots for

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eleven shillings and sixpence ; sell for sixteen shillings. What you buy at one pound, you sell for thirty shillings—at Kimberley. That is the custom. No good selling bad things. All the digger-men know and the Kaffirs too.

“The Kaffir is a strange man. He comes into the shops and say, taking a blanket, ‘How much?’ in the Kaffir talk—So!”

Surjun here delivered the most wonderful series of clicks that I had ever heard from a human throat.

“That is how the Kaffir asks ‘How much?’” said Surjun, calmly, enjoying the sensation that he had produced.

“Then you say, ‘No, *you* say,’ and you say it so.” (More clicks and a sound like a hurricane of kisses.) “Then the Kaffir he say: ‘No, no, that blanket your blanket, not my blanket. *You* say.’” “And how long does this business last?” “Till the Kaffir he tired, and *says*,” answered Surjun. “And then do you begin the real bargaining?” “Yes,” said Surjun, “same as in bazaar here. The Kaffir he says, ‘I can’t pay!’ Then you fold up blanket, and Kaffir goes away. Then he comes back and says ‘*gobu*,’ that is Kaffir for blanket. And so you sell him all he wants.”

“Poor Kaffir! And what is Kimberley like to look at?”

“A beautiful clean place—all so clean, and there is a very good law there. This law. A man he come into your compound after nine o’clock, and say *vootsac*—same as *nickle*

*jao*—and he doesn't *vootsac* suppose you shoot that man and he dies, and he calls you before magistrate, he can't do nothing."

"Very few dead men can. Are you allowed to shoot before saying *vootsac*?"

"Oh Hell, yes! Shoot if you see him in the compound after nine o'clock. That is the law. Perhaps he have come to steal diamonds. Many men steal diamonds, and buy and sell without license. That is called *Aidibi*."

"What?"

"*Aidibi*."

"Oh! 'I. D. B.' I see. Well, what happens to them?"

"They go to jail for years and years. Very many men in jail for I. D. B. Very many men your people, very few *mine*. Heaps of Kaffirs. Kaffir he swallows diamond, and takes medicine to find him again. You get not less than ten years for I. D. B. But I and my friend, we stay in our iron house and mind shop. That too is the way to make money."

"Aren't your people glad to see you when you come back?"

"My people is all dead. Father dead, mother dead; and only brother living with some children across the river. I have been there, but that is not my place. I belong to nowhere now. They are all dead. After a few weeks I take my steamer to Kimberley, and then my friend he come here and put his money in the Bank."

"Why don't you bank in Kimberley?"

"I wanted to see my brother, and I have given him one thousand rupees. No, one hundred pounds; that is more, more. Here is the Bank bill. All the others he is dead. There are some people of this country at Kimberley,—Rajputs, Brahmins, Ahirs, Parsees, Chamars, Bunnias, Telis,—all kinds go there. But my people are dead. I shall take my brother's son back with me to Kimberley, and when he can talk the Kaffir talk, he will be useful, and he shall come into the firm. My brother does not mind. He sees that I am rich. And now I must go to the village, Sahib. Good day, sir."

Surjun rose, made as if to depart, but returned. The Native had come to the top.

"*Sahib!* Is this talk for publish in paper?"

"Yes."

"Then put in about this diamond ring." He went away, twirling the ring lovingly on his finger.

Know, therefore, O Public, by these presents that Surjun, son of Surjun, one time resident in the village of Jhusi, in the District of Allahabad, in the Northwest Provinces, at present partner in the firm of Surjun and Jagesser Dubé, De Beer's Terrace, De Beer's Fields, Kimberley, who has tempted his fortune beyond the seas, owns legally and rightfully a Cape stone, valued at thirteen pounds four shillings sterling, sold to him by Behrendt of Dutoitspan Road, Kimberley.

And it looks uncommonly well.

## THE VENGEANCE OF LAL BEG

THIS is the true story of the terrible disgrace that came to Jullundri *mehter*, through Jamuna, his wife. Those who say that a *mehter* has no caste speak in ignorance, Those who say that there is a caste in the Empire so mean and so abject that there are no castes below it, speak in greater ignorance. The *arain* says that the *chamar* has no caste ; the *chamar* knows that the *mehter* has none ; and the *mehter* swears by Lal Beg, his god, that the *od* whose god is Bhagirat is without caste. Below the *od* lies the *kaparia-bawaria* in spite of all that the low-caste *Brahmins* say or do. A *Teji mehter* or a *Sundoo mehter* is as much above a *kaparia-bawaria* as an Englishman is above a *mehter*. Lal Beg is the *Mehter*-god, and his image is the Glorified Broom made of peacocks' feathers, red cloth, scraps of tinsel, and the cast-off finery of English toilette tables.

Jamuna was a *Malka-sansi* of Gujrat, an eater of lizards and dogs, one " married under the basket," a worshiper of Malang Shah. When her first husband was cast into the Lahore Central Jail for lifting a pony on the banks of the Ravee, Jamuna cut herself adrift from her section of the tribe and let it pass on to Delhi. She believed that the govern-

ment would keep her man for two or three days only ; but it kept him for two years,—long enough for a *sansi* to forget everything in this world except the customs of her tribe. Those are never forgotten.

As she waited for the return of her man, she scraped acquaintance with a *mehtrancee ayah* in the employ of a Eurasian, and assisted her in the grosser portions of her work. She also earned money,—sufficient money to buy her a cloth and food. “The *sansi*,” as one of their proverbs says, “will thrive in a desert.” “What are you ?” said the *mehtrancee* to Jamuna. “A *Boorat mehtrancee*,” said Jamuna, for the *sansi* as one of their proverbs says, are quick-witted as snakes. “A *Boorat mehtrancee* from the south,” said Jamuna ; and her statement was not questioned, for she wore good clothes, and her black hair was combed and neatly parted.

Clinging to the skirts of the Eurasian’s *ayah* Jamuna climbed to service under an Englishman—a railway employé’s wife. Jamuna had ambitions. It was pleasant to be a *mehtrancee* of good standing. It will be better still, thought Jamuna to turn Mussulman and be married to a real table-servant, openly, by the *mullah*. Such things had been ; and Jamuna was fair.

But Jullundri, *mehter*, was a man to win the heart of woman, and he stole away Jamuna’s in the dusk, when she took the English babies for their walks.

"You have brought me a stranger-wife. Why did you not marry among your own clan?" said his gray-haired mother to Jullundri. "A stranger wife is a curse and a fire." Jullundri laughed; for he was a jemadar of *mehters*, drawing seven rupees a month, and Jamuna loved him.

"A curse and a fire and a shame," muttered the old woman, and she slunk into her hut and cursed Jamuna.

But Lal Beg, the very powerful God of the *mehters*, was not deceived, and he put a stumbling-block in the path of Jamuna that brought her to open shame. "A *sansi* is as quick-witted as a snake;" but the snake longs for the cactus hedge, and a *sansi* for the desolate freedom of the wild ass. Jamuna knew the chant of Lal Beg, the prayer to the Glorified Broom, and had sung it many times in rear of the staggering, tottering pole as it was borne down the Mall. Lal Beg was insulted.

His great festival in the month of *Har* brought him revenge on Jamuna and Jullundri. Husband and wife followed the Glorified Broom, through the station and beyond, to the desolate gray flats by the river, near the Forest Reserve and the Bridge-of-Boats. Two hundred *mehters* shouted and sang till their voices failed them, and they halted in the sand, still warm with the day's sun. On a spit near the burning *gâht*, a band of *sansis* had encamped, and one of their number had brought in a

ragged bag full of lizards caught on the Meean Meer road. The gang were singing over their captures, singing that quaint song of the Passing of the *Sansis*," which fires the blood of all true thieves.

Over the sand the notes struck clearly on Jamuna's ear as the Lal Beg procession reformed and moved Citywards. But louder than the cry of worshipers of Lal Beg rose the song of Jamuna, the sober *Boorat mehtrane*, and mother of Jullundri's children. Shrill as the noise of the night-wind among rocks went back to the *sansi* camp the answer of the "Passing of the *Sansis*," and the *mehters* drew back in horror. But Jamuna heard only the call from the ragged huts by the river, and the call of the song—

"The horses, the horses, the fat horses, and the sticks,  
the little sticks of the tents, *Aho! Aho!*  
Feet that leave no mark on the sand, and fingers that  
leave no trace on the door, *Aho! Aho!*  
By the name of Malang Shah ; in darkness, by the reed  
and the rope. . . ."

So far Jamuna sang, but the head man of the procession of Lal Beg struck her heavily across the mouth, saying, "By this I know that thou art a *sansi*."



## HUNTING A MIRACLE.

MARCHING-ORDERS as vague as the following naturally ended in confusion: "There's a priest somewhere, in Amritsar or outside it, or somewhere else, who cut off his tongue some days ago, and says it's grown again. Go and look." Amritsar is a city with a population of one hundred and fifty thousand, more or less, and so huge that a tramway runs round the walls. To lay hands on one particular man of all the crowd was not easy; for the tongue having grown again, he would in no way differ from his fellows. Now, had he remained tongueless, an inspection of the mouths of the passers-by would have been some sort of guide. However, dumb or tongued, all Amritsar knew about him. The small Parsee boy, who appears to run the refreshment-room alone, volunteered the startling information that the "Priest without the tongue could be found all anywhere, in the city or elsewhere," and waved his little hands in circles to show the vastness of his knowledge. A booking-clerk—could it be possible that he was of the Arya-Samaj?—had also heard of the *Sadhu*, and, pen in hand, denounced him as an impostor, a "bad person," and a "fraudulent mendicant." He grew so excited, and jabbed his pen so viciously into the air that his

questioner fled to a *ticca-ghari*, where he was prompted by some Imp of Perversity to simulate extreme ignorance of the language to deceive the driver. So he said twice with emphasis, "*Sadhu ?*" "Jehan," said the driver, "fush-class, Durbar Sahib !" Then the fare thrust out his tongue, and the scales fell from the driver's eyes. "*Bahut accha,*" said the driver, and without further parley headed into the trackless desert that encircles Fort Govindghar. The Sahib's word conveyed no meaning to him, but he understood the gesture ; and, after a while, turned the carriage from a road to a plain.

Close to the Lahore Veterinary School lies a cool, brick-built, tree-shaded monastery, studded with the tombs of the pious founders, adorned with steps, terraces, and winding paths, which is known as Chajju Bhagat's Chubara. This place is possessed with the spirit of peace, and is filled by priests in salmon-colored loin-cloths and a great odor of sanctity. The Amritsar driver had halted in the very double of the Lahore *chubara*—assuring his fare that here and nowhere else would be found the *Sadhu* with the miraculous tongue.

Indeed the surroundings were such as delight the holy men of the East. There was a sleepy breeze through the *pipals* overhead, and a square court crammed with pigeon-holes where one might sleep ; there were fair walls and mounds and little mud plat-

forms against or on which fires for cooking could be built, and there were wells by the dozen. There were priests by the score who sprang out of the dust, and slid off balconies or rose from cots as inquiries were made for the *Sadhu*. They were nice priests, sleek, full-fed, thick-jowled beasts, undefiled by wood-ash or turmeric, and mostly good-looking. The older men sang songs to the squirrels and the dust-puffs that the light wind was raising on the plain. They were idle—very idle. The younger priests stated that the *Sadhu* with the tongue had betaken himself to another *chubara* some miles away, and was even then being worshiped by hordes of admirers. They did not specify the exact spot, but pointed vaguely in the direction of Jandiala. However, the driver said he knew and made haste to depart. The priests pointed out courteously that the weather was warm, and that it would be better to rest awhile before starting. So a rest was called, and while he sat in the shadow of the gate of the courtyard, the Englishman realized for a few minutes why it is that, now and then, men of his race, suddenly going mad, turn to the people of this land and become their priests; as did — on the Bombay side, and later —, who lived for a time with the *fakir* on the top of Jakko. The miraculous idleness—the monumental sloth of the place; the silence as the priests settled down to sleep one by one; the drowsy drone of one of the younger

men who had thrown himself stomach-down in the warm dust and was singing under his breath; the warm airs from across the plain and the faint smell of burnt *ghi* and incense, laid hold of the mind and limbs till, for at least fifteen seconds, it seemed that life would be a good thing if one could doze, and bask, and smoke from the rising of the sun till the twilight—a fat hog among fat hogs.

The chase was resumed, and the *ghari* drove to Jandiala—more or less. It abandoned the main roads completely, although it was a “fush-class,” and comported itself like an *ekka*, till Amritsar sunk on the horizon, or thereabouts, and it pulled up at a second *chubara*, more peaceful and secluded than the first, and fenced with a thicker belt of trees. There was an eruption under the horses’ feet and a scattering of dust, which presently settled down and showed a beautiful young man with a head such as artists put on the shoulders of Belial. It was the head of an unlicked devil, marvelously handsome, and it made the horses shy. Belial knew nothing of the *Sadhu* who had cut out the tongue. He scowled at the driver, scowled at the fare, and then settled down in the dust, laughing wildly, and pointing to the earth and the sky. Now for a native to laugh aloud, without reason, publicly and at high noon, is a gruesome thing and calculated to chill the blood. Even the sight of silver coinage had no effect on Belial. He dilated his nostrils, pursed his

lips, and gave himself up to renewed mirth. As there seemed to be no one else in the *chubara*, the carriage drove away, pursued by the laughter of the Beautiful Young Man in the Dust. A priest was caught wandering on the road, but for long, he denied all knowledge of the *Sadhu*. In vain the Englishman protested that he came as a humble believer in cold tongue; that he carried an offering of rupees for the *Sadhu*; that he regarded the *Sadhu* as one of the leading men of the century, and would render him immortal for at least twelve hours. The priest was dumb. He was next bribed—extortionately bribed—and said that the *Sadhu* was at the Durbar Sahib preaching. To the Golden Temple accordingly the carriage went and found the regular array of ministers and the eternal passage of Sikh women round and round the Grunth; which things have been more than once described in this paper. But there was no *Sadhu*. An old *Nihang*, gray-haired and sceptical—for he had lived some thirty years in a church as it were—was sitting on the steps of the tank, dabbling his feet in the water.

“O Sahib,” said he, blandly, “what concern have you with a miraculous *Sadhu*? You are not a Poliswala. And, O Sahib, what concern has the *Sadhu* with you?” The Englishman explained with heat—for fruitless drives in the middle of an October day are trying to the temper—his adventures at the various *chubaras*, not omitting the incident of

the Beautiful Young Man in the Dust. The *Nihang* smiled shrewdly: "Without doubt, Sahib, these men have told you lies. They do not want you to see the *Sadhu*; and the *Sadhu* does not desire to see you. This affair is an affair for the common people and not for Sahibs. The honor of the Gods is increased; but *you* do not worship the Gods." So saying he gravely began to undress and waddled into the water.

Then the Englishman perceived that he had been basely betrayed by the *ghari*-driver, and all the priests of the first *chubara*, and the wandering priest near the second *chubara*; and that the only sensible person was the Beautiful Young Man in the Dust, and *he* was mad.

This vexed the Englishman, and he came away. If *Sadhus* cut out their tongues and if the great Gods restore them, the devotees might at least have the decency to be interviewed.

## THE EXPLANATION OF MIR BAKSH.

“ My notion was that you had been  
(Before they had this fit)  
An obstacle that came between  
Him and ourselves and it.”

“ That’s the most important piece of evidence we’ve heard yet,” said the king, rubbing his hands. “ So now let the jury . . . ”

“ If any one of them can explain it,” said Alice, “ I’ll give him sixpence. I don’t believe there’s an atom of meaning in it.”

—*Alice in Wonderland.*

THIS, Protector of the Poor, is the *hissab* (your bill of house expenses) for last month and a little bit of the month before,—eleven days,—and this, I think, is what it will be next month. Is it a long bill in five sheets? Assuredly yes, Sahib. Are the accounts of so honorable a house as the house of the Sahib to be kept on one sheet only? This *hissab* cost one rupee to write. It is true that the Sahib will pay the one rupee; but consider how beautiful and how true is the account, and how clean is the paper. Ibrahim, who is the very best petition-writer in all the bazaar, drew it up. Ahoo! Such an account is this account! And I am to explain it all? Is it not written there in the red ink, and the black ink, and the green ink? What more does the Heaven-born want? Ibrahim, who is the best of all

the petition-writers in the bazaar, made this *hissab*. There is an envelope also. Shall I fetch that envelope? Ibrahim has written your name outside in three inks—a very *murasla* is this envelope. An explanation? Ahoo! God is my witness that it is as plain as the sun at noon. By your Honor's permission I will explain, taking the accounts in my hand.

Now there are four accounts—that for last month, which is in red; that for the month before, which is in black; that for the month to come, which is in green; and an account of private expense, and dispenses which is in pencil. Does the Presence understand that? Very good talk.

There was the bread, and the milk, and the cow's food, and both horses, and the saddle-soap for last month, which is in green ink. No, red ink—the Presence speaks the truth. It was red ink, and it was for last month, and that was fifty-seven rupees eight annas; *but* there was the cost of a new manger for the cow, to be sunk into mud, and that was eleven annas. But I did not put *that* into the last month's account. I carried that over to *this* month—the green ink. No? There is no account for this month? Your Honor speaks the truth. Those eleven annas I carried thus—in my head.

The Sahib has said it is not a matter of eleven annas, but of seventy-seven rupees. That is quite true; but, O Sahib, if I, and



Ibrahim, who is the best petition-writer in the bazaar, do not attend to the annas, how shall your substance increase? So the food and the saddle-soap for the cows and the other things were fifty-seven rupees eight annas, and the servants' wages were a hundred and ten—all for last month. And now I must think, for this is a large account. Oh yes! It was in Jeth that I spoke to the *Dhobi* about the washing, and he said, "my bill will be eleven rupees two pies." It is written there in the green ink, and that, in addition to the soap was sixty-eight rupees, seven annas, two pies. All of last month. And the hundred and ten rupees for the servants' wages make the total to one hundred and seventy-eight rupees, seven annas, two pies, as Ibrahim, who is the best petition-writer in the bazaar, has set down.

But I said that all things would only be one hundred and fifty? Yes. That was at first, Sahib, before I was well aware of all things. Later on, it will be in the memory of the Presence that I said it would be one hundred and ninety. But that was before I had spoken to the *Dhobi*. No, it was before I had bought the trunk-straps for which you gave orders. I remember that I said it would be one hundred and ninety. Why is the Sahib so hot? Is not the account long enough? I know always what the expense of the house would be. Let the Presence follow my finger. That is the green ink, that is the black, here

is the red, and there is the pencil-mark of the private expenses. To this I add what I said six weeks ago before I had bought the trunk-straps by your order. And so that is a *fifth* account. Very good talk ! The Presence has seen what happened last month, and I will now show the month before last, and the month that is to come—together in little brackets ; the one bill balancing to the other like swinging scales.

Thus runs the account of the month before last:—A box of matches three pies, and black thread for buttons three annas (it was the best black thread), *khas-khas* for the *tatties* twelve annas ; and the other things forty-one rupees. To which that of the month to come had an answer in respect to the candles for the dog-cart ; but I did not know how much these would cost, and I have written one rupee two annas, for they are always changing their prices in the bazaar. And the oil for the carriage is one rupee, and the other things are forty-one rupees, and that is for the next month.

An explanation ? Still an explanation ? *Khuda-ka-kusm*, have I not explained and has not Ibrahim, who is notoriously the best petition-writer in the bazaar, put it down in the red ink, and the green ink, and the black ; and is there not the private dispens account, withal, showing what should have been but which fell out otherwise, and what might have been but could not ?

*Ai*, Sahib, what can I do ? It is perhaps

a something heavy bill, but there were reasons ; and let the Presence consider that the *Dhobi* lived at the *ghat* over against the river, and I had to go there—two *kos*, upon my faith!—to get his bill ; and, moreover, the horses were shod at the hospital, and that was a *kos* away, and the Hospital Babu was late in rendering his accounts. Does the Sahib say that I should know how the accounts will fall—not only for the month before last, but for this month as well ? I do—I did—I will do ! Is it my fault that more rupees have gone than I knew ? The Sahib laughs ! Forty years I have been a *khansamah* to the Sahib-log—from *masalchi* to mate, and head *khansamah* have I risen (*smites himself on the breast*), and never have I been laughed at before. Why does the Sahib laugh ? By the blessed *Imams*, my uncle was cook to Jan Larens, and I am a priest at the Musjid ; and I am laughed at ? Sahib, seeing that there were so many bills to come in, and that the *Dhobi* lived at the *ghat* as I have said, and the Horse hospital was a *kos* away, and God only knows where the sweeper lived, but *his* account came late also, it is not strange that I should be a little stupid as to my accounts, whereof there are so many. For the *Dhobi* was at the *ghat*, etc. Forty years have I been a *khansamah*, and there is no *khansamah* who could have kept his accounts so well. Only by my great and singular regard for the welfare of the Presence does it come about that

they are not a hundred rupees wrong. For the *Dhobi* was at the *ghat*, etc. And I will *not* be laughed at! The accounts are beautiful accounts, and only I could have kept them.

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*

*Sahib—Sahib ! Gariparwar !* I have been to Ibrahim, who is the best petition-writer in the bazaar, and he has written all that I have said—all that the Sahib could not understand—upon pink paper from Sialkot. So now there are the five accounts *and* the explanation; and for the writing of all six you, O Sahib, must pay! But for my honor's sake do not laugh at me any more.

A LETTER FROM GOLAM SINGH.

*From Golam Singh, Mistri, Landin, Belait, to Ram Singh, Mistri, son of Jeewun Singh, in the town of Rajah Jung, in the tehsil of Kasur, in the district of Lahore, in the Province of the Punjab.*

Wah Gooroojee ki futteh.

CALL together now our friends and brothers, and our children, and the Lambardar, to the big square by the well. Say that I, Golam Singh, have written you a letter across the Black Water, and let the town hear of the wonders which I have seen in Belait. Rutton Singh, the *bunni*, who has been to Delhi, will tell you, my brother, that I am a liar; but I have witnesses of our faith, besides the others, who will attest when we return what I have written.

I have now been many days in Belait, in this big city. Though I were to write till my hand fell from my wrist, I could not state its bigness. I myself know that, to see one another, the Sahib-log, of whom there are crores of crores, use the railway dâk, which is laid not above the ground as is the *Sirkar's* railway in our own country, but underneath it, below the houses. I have gone down myself

into this rail together with the other witnesses. The air is very bad in those places, and this is why the Sahib-log have become white.

There are more people here than I have ever seen. Ten times as many as there are at Delhi, and they are all Sahibs who do us great honor. Many hundred Sahibs have been in our country, and they all speak to us, asking if we are pleased.

In this city the streets run for many miles in a straight line, and are so broad that four bullock-carts of four bullocks might stand side by side. At night they are lit with English lamps, which need no oil, but are fed by wind which burns. I and the others have seen this. By day sometimes the sun does not shine, and the city becomes black. Then these lamps are lit all day and men go to work.

The bazaars are three times as large as our bazaars, and the shopkeepers, who are all Sahibs, sit inside where they cannot be seen, but their name is written outside. There are no *bunnia's* shops, and all the prices are written. If the price is high, it cannot be lowered; nor will the shopkeeper bargain at all. This is very strange. But I have witnesses.

One shop I have seen was twice as large as Rajah Jung. It held hundreds of shopkeeper-sahibs and *memsahibs*, and thousands who come to buy. The Sahib-log speak one talk when they purchase their bazaar, and they make no noise.

There are no *ekkas* here, but there are yellow and green *ticca-gharies* bigger than Rutton Singh's house, holding half a hundred people. The horses here are as big as elephants. I have seen no ponies, and there are no buffaloes.

It is not true that the Sahibs use the *belaitee punkah* (the thermantidote) like as you and I made for the Dipty Sahib two years ago. The air is cold, and there are neither coolies nor verandas. Nor do the Sahibs drink *belaitee panee* (soda-water) when they are thirsty. They drink water—very clean and good—as we do.

In this city there are plains so vast that they appear like jungle; but when you have crossed them you come again to lakhs of houses, and there are houses on all sides. None of the houses are of mud or wood, but all are in brick or stone. Some have carved doors in stone, but the carving is very bad. Even the door of Rutton Singh's house is better carved; but Rutton Singh's house could be put into any fore-court of these *belaitee* houses. They are as big as mountains.

No one sleeps outside his house or in the road. This is thought shameless; but it is very strange to see. There are no flat roofs to the houses. They are all pointed; I have seen this and so have the others.

In this city there are so many carriages and horses in the street that a man, to cross over, must call a *police-wallah*, who puts up his

hand, and the carriages stop. I swear to you by our father that on account of me Golam Singh mistri, all the carriages of many streets have been stopped that I might cross like a Padshah. Let Rutton Singh know this.

In this city for four annas you may send news faster than the wind over four hundred *kos*. There are witnesses; and I have a paper of the Government showing that this is true.

In this city our honor is very great, and we have learned to *shekand* like the *Sahib-logue*. All the *memsahibs*, who are very beautiful, look at us, but we do not understand their talk. These *memsahibs* are like the *memsahibs* in our country.

In this city there are a hundred dances every night. The houses where they *nautch* hold many thousand people, and the *nautch* is so wonderful that I cannot describe it. The Sahibs are a wonderful people. They can make a sea upon dry land, and then a fire, and then a big fort with soldiers—all in half an hour while you look. The other men will say this too, for they also saw what I saw at one of the *nautches*.

Rutton Singh's son, who has become a pleader, has said that the Sahibs are only men like us black men. This is a lie, for they know more than we know. I will tell. When we people left Bombay for Belait, we came upon the Black Water, which you cannot understand. For five days we saw only the water, as flat



as a planed board with no marks on it. Yet the Captain Sahib in charge of the fire-boat said, from the first, "In five days we shall reach a little town, and in four more a big canal." These things happened as he had said, though there was nothing to point the road, and the little town was no bigger than the town of Lod. We came there by night, and *yet* the Captain Sahib knew! How, then, can Rutton Singh's son say such lies? I have seen this city in which are crores of crores of people. There is no end to its houses and its shops, for I have never yet seen the open jungle. There is nothing hidden from these people. They can turn the night into day [I have seen it], and they never rest from working. It is true that they do not understand carpenter's work, but all other things they understand, as I and the people with me have seen. They are no common people.

Bid our father's widow see to my house and little Golam Singh's mother ; for I return in some months, and I have bought many wonderful things in this country, the like of which you have never seen. But your minds are ignorant, and you will say I am a liar. I shall, therefore, bring my witnesses to humble Rutton Singh, *bunniya*, who went to Delhi, and who is an owl and the son of an owl.

AP-KI-DAS, GOLAM SINGH.

## THE WRITING OF YAKUB KHAN.

*From Yakub Khan, Kuki Khel, of Lala China, Malik, in the Englishman's City of Calcutta with Vahbtahn Sahib, to Katal Khan, Kuki Khel, of Lala China, which is in the Khai-bar. This letter to go by the Sirkar's mail to Pubbi, and thence Mahbub Ali, the writer, takes delivery and, if God pleases, gives to my son.*

*Also, for my heart is clean, this writing goes on to Sultan Khan, on the upper hill over against Kuka Ghos, which is in Bara, through the country of the Zuka Khel. Mahbub Ali goes through if God pleases.*

*To My Son.*—Know this. I have come with the others and Vahbtahn (Warburton) Sahib, as was agreed, down to the river, and the rail-dâk does *not* stop at Attock. Thus the Mullah of Tordurra lied. Remember this when next he comes for food. The rail-dâk goes on for many days. The others who came with me are witnesses to this. Fifteenth times, for there was but little to do in the dâk, I made all the prayers from the *niyah* to the *munajat*, and yet the journey was not ended. And at the places where we stopped there were often to be seen the fighting-men of the English, such as those we killed, when certain

of our men went with the Bonerwals in the matter of Umbeyla, whose guns I have in my house. Everywhere there were fighting-men ; but it may be that the English were afraid of us, and so drew together all their troops upon the line of the rail-dâk and the fire-carriage. Vahbtahn Sahib is a very clever man, and he may have given the order. None the less, there must be many troops in this country ; more than all the strength of the Afridis. But Yar Khan says that all the land, which runs to the east and to the west many days' journey in the rail-dâk, is also full of fighting-men, and big guns by the score. Our Mullahs gave us no news of this when they said that, in the matter of six years gone, there were no more English in the land, all having been sent to Afghanistan, and that the country was rising in fire behind them. Tell the Mullah of Tordurra the words of Yar Khan. He has lied in respect to the rail-dâk, and it may be that he will now speak the truth regarding what his son saw when he went to Delhi with the horses. I have asked many men for news of the strength of the fighting-men in this country, and all say that it is very great. Howbeit, Vahbtahn Sahib is a clever man and may have told them to speak thus, as I told the women of Sikanderkheogarhi to speak when we were pressed by the Sangu Khel, in that night when you, my son, took Torukh Khan's head, and I saw that I had bred a man.

If there be as many men throughout the place as I have seen and the people say, the mouth of the Khaibar is shut, and it were better to give no heed to our Mullahs. But read further and see for what reasons I, who am a Malak of the Kuki Khel, say this. I have come through many cities—all larger than Cabul. Rawal Pindi, which is far beyond the Attock, whence came all the English who fought us in the business of six years gone. That is a great city, filled with fighting-men—four thousand of both kinds, and guns. Lahore is also a great city, with another four thousand troops, and that is one night by the rail-dâk from Rawal Pindi. Amritsar has a strong fort, but I do not know how many men are there. The words of the people who go down with the grapes and the almonds in the winter are true, and our Mullahs have lied to us. Jullundur is also a place of troops, and there is a fort at Phillour, and there are many thousand men at Umballa, which is one night, going very swiftly in the rail-dâk, from Lahore. And at Meerut, which is half a day from Umballa, there are more men and horses; and at Delhi there are more also, in a very strong fort. Our people go only as far south as Delhi; but beyond Delhi there are no more strong Punjabi people—but only a mean race without strength. The country is very rich here, flat, with cattle and crops. We, of the villages of the Khaibar alone, could loot these people; but there are more fighting-men at

Agra, and at Cawnpore, and at Allahabad, and many other places, whose names do not stay with me. Thus, my son, by day and by night, always going swiftly in the rail-dâk we came down to this very big city of Calcutta.

My mouth dripped when I saw the place that they call Bengal—so rich it was; and my heart was troubled when I saw how many of the English were there. The land is very strongly held, and there are a multitude of English and half-English in the place. They give us great honor, but all men regard us as though we were strange beasts, and not fighting-men with hundreds of guns. If Yar Khan has spoken truth and the land throughout is as I have seen, and no show has been made to fill us with fear, I, Yakub Khan, tell you my son, and you, O Sultan Khan! that the English do well to thus despise us; for on the Oath of a Pathan, we are only beasts in their sight. It may be that Vahbtahn Sahib has told them all to look at us in this manner—for, though we receive great honor, no man shows fear, and busies himself with his work when we have passed by. Even that very terrible man, the Governor of Cabul, would be as no one in this great City of Calcutta. Were I to write what I have seen, all our people would say that I was mad and a liar. But this I write privately, that only you, my son, and Sultan Khan may see; for ye know that, in respect to my own blood, I am no liar.

There are lights without oil or wood burning brightly in this city; and on the water of the river lie boats which go by fire, as the rail-dâk goes, carrying men and fighting-men by two and three thousand. God knows whence they come! They travel by water, and therefore there must be yet another country to the eastward full of fighting-men. I cannot make clear how these things are. Every day more boats come. I do not think that this is arranged by Vahbtahn Sahib; for no man in those boats takes any notice of us; and we feel, going to and from every place, that we are children. When that Kaffir came to us, three years ago, is it in thy memory how, before we shot him, we looked on him for a show, and the children came out and laughed? In this place no children laugh at us; but none the less do we feel that we are all like that man from Kafirstan.

In the matter of our safe-conduct, be at ease. We are with Vahbtahn Sahib, and his word is true. Moreover, as we said in the *jirgah*, we have been brought down to see the richness of the country, and for that reason they will do us no harm. I cannot tell why they, being so strong,—if these things be not all arranged by Vahbtahn Sahib,—took any trouble for us. Yar Khan, whose heart has become so soft within him in three days, says that the louse does not kill the Afridi, but none the less the Afridi takes off his upper-coat for the itching. This is a bitter say-

ing, and I, O my son, and O my friend Sultan Khan, am hard upon believing it.

I put this charge upon you. Whatever the Mullah of Tordurra may say, both respecting the matter that *we* know of, which it is not prudent to write, and respecting the going-out in spring against the Sangu Khel, do you, my son, and you, Sultan Khan, keep the men of the Khaibar villages, and the men of the Upper Bara, *still*, till I return and can speak with my mouth. The blood-feuds are between man and man, and these must go forward by custom; but let there be no more than single shots fired. We will speak together, and ye will discover that my words are good. I would give hope if I could, but I cannot give hope. Yar Khan says that it were well to keep to the blood-feuds only; and he hath said openly among us, in the smoking-time, that he has a fear of the English, greater than any fear of the curses of our Mullahs. Ye know that I am a man unafraid. Ye knew when I cut down the Malik of the Sipah Khel, when he came into Kadam, that I was a man unafraid. But this is no matter of one man's life, or the lives of a hundred, or a thousand; and albeit I cursed Yar Khan with the others, yet in my heart I am afraid even as he is. If these English, and God knows where their homes lie, for they come from a strange place, we do not know how strong in fighting-men,—if, O my son, and friend of my heart Sultan Khan, these devils can thus fill the land over



four days' journey by this very swift rail-dâk from Peshawar, and can draw white light, as bright as the sun, from iron poles, and can send fire-boats full of men *from the east*, and moreover, as I have seen, can make new rupees as easily as women make cow-dung cakes,—what can the Afridis do?

The Mullah of Tordurra said that they came from the *west*, and that their rail-dâk stopped at Attock, and that there were none of them except those who came into our country in the great fight. In all three things he has lied. Give no heed to him. I myself will shoot him when I return. If he be a Saint, there will be miracles over his tomb, which I will build. If he be no Saint, there is but one Mullah the less. It were better that he should die than take the Khaibar villages into a new blockade; as did the Mullah of Kardara, when we were brought to shame by Jan Larens and I was a young man.

The black men in this place are dogs and children. To such an one I spoke yesterday, saying, "Where is Vahbtahn Sahib?" and he answered nothing, but laughed. I took him by the throat and shook him, only a little and very gently, for I did not wish to bring trouble on Vahbtahn Sahib, and he has said that our customs are not the customs of this country. This black man wept, and said that I had killed him, but truly I had only shaken him to and fro. He was a fat man, with white stockings, dressed in woman's fashion, speak-



ing English, but acting without courtesy either to the Sahibs or to us. Thus are all the black people in the city of Calcutta. But for these English, we who are here now could loot the city, and portion out the women, who are fair.

I have bought an English rifle for you, my son, better than the one which Shere Khan stole from Cherat last summer, throwing to two thousand paces; and for Sultan Khan an English revolver, as he asked. Of the wonders of this great city I will speak when we meet, for I cannot write them.

When I came from Lala China the tale of blood between our house and the house of Zarmat Shah lacked one on our side. I have been gone many days, but I have no news from you that it is made even. If ye have not yet killed the boy who had the feud laid upon him when I went, do nothing but guard your lives till ye get the new rifle. With a steady rest it will throw across the valley into Zarmat Shah's field, and so ye can kill the women at evening.

Now I will cease, for I am tired of this writing. Make Mahbub Ali welcome, and bid him stay till ye have written an answer to this, telling me whether all be well in my house. My blood is not cold that I charge you once again to give no ear to the Mullahs, who have lied, as I will show; and, above all else, to keep the villages still till I return. Nor am I a clucking hen of a Khuttick if I write last, that

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these English are devils, against whom only the Will of God can help us.

“ And why should we beat our heads against a rock, for we only spill our brains :

And when we have the Valley to content us, why should we go out against the Mountain ?

A strong man, saith Kabir, is strong only till he meet with a stronger.”

## A KING'S ASHES.

1888: On Wednesday morning last, the ashes of the late ruler of Gwalior were consigned to the Ganges without the walls of Allahabad Fort. Scindia died in June of last year, and, shortly after the cremation, the main portion of the ashes were taken to the water. Yesterday's function, the disposal of what remained (it is impossible not to be horrible in dealing with such a subject), was comparatively of an unimportant nature, but sufficiently grim to witness.

Beyond the melon-beds and *chappar* villages that stand upon the spit of sun-baked mud and sand at the confluence of the Jumna and the Ganges, lies a flag bedizened home of *fakirs*, *gurus*, *gosains*, *sanyasis*, and the like. A stone's throw from this place boils and eddies the line of demarcation between the pure green waters of the Jumna and the turbid current of the Ganges, and here they brought the ashes of Scindia. With these came minor functionaries of the Gwalior State, six Brahmins of the Court, and nine of Scindia's relatives. In his lifetime, the Maharaja had a deep and rooted distrust of his own family and clan, and no Scindia was ever allowed office about him. Indeed, so great was his aversion that he would not even permit them

to die in the Luskar, or City of Gwalior. They must needs go out when their last hour came, and die in a neighboring *jaghir* village which belonged to Sir Michael Filose, one of that Italian family which has served the State so long and faithfully. When such an one had died, Scindia, by his own command, was not informed of the event till the prescribed days of mourning had elapsed. Then notice was given to him by the placing of his bed on the ground,—a sign of mourning,—and he would ask, not too tenderly, “Which Scindia is dead?”

Considering this unamiable treatment, the wonder was that so many as nine of his own kin could be found to attend the last rites on that sun-dried mud-bank. There was, or seemed to be, no attempt at ceremony, and, naturally enough, no pretense at grief; nor was there any gathering of native notables. The common crowd and the multitude of priests had the spectacle to themselves, if we except a few artillery men from the Fort, who had strolled down to see what was happening to “one of them (qualified) kings.” By ten o’clock, a tawdry silken litter bearing the the ashes and accompanied by the mourners, had reached the water’s edge, where wooden cots had been run out into the stream, and where the water deepened boats had been employed to carry the press of sight-seers. Underfoot, the wet ground was trodden by hundreds of feet into a slimy pulp of mud and

stale flowers of sacrifice ; and on this compost slipped and blundered a fine white horse, whose fittings were heavy with bosses of new silver. He and a big elephant adorned with a necklace of silver plaques, was a gift to the priests who in cash and dinners would profit by the day's work to the extent of eight or ten thousand rupees.

Overhead a hundred *fakirs'* flags, bearing devices of gods, beasts, and the trident of Shiva, fluttered in the air ; while all around, like vultures drawn by carrion, crowded the priests. There were burly, bull-necked, freshly oiled ruffians, sleek of paunch and jowl, clothed in pure white linen ; mad wandering mendicants carrying the peacock's feather, the begging bowl, and the patched cloak ; salmon-robed *sanyasis*—from up country,—and evil-eyed *gosains* from the south. They crowded upon the wooden bedsteads, piled themselves upon the boats, and jostled into the first places in the crowd in the mud, and all their eyes were turned toward two nearly naked men who seemed to be kneading some Horror in their hands and dropping it into the water. The closely packed boats rocked gently, the crowd babbled and buzzed, and uncouth music wailed and shrieked, while from behind the sullen, squat bulk of Allahabad Fort, the booming of minute-guns announced that the Imperial Government was paying honor to the memory of his Highness Maharaja Jyaji Rao Scindia, G. C. B., G. C. S. I., once owner

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of twenty thousand square miles of land, nearly three million people, and treasure untold, if all tales be true. Not fifty yards up-stream, a swollen dead goat was bobbing up and down in the water in a ghastly parody on kidlike skittishness, and green filth was cast ashore by every little wave.

Was there anything more to see? The white horse refused to be led into the water and splashed all the bystanders with dirt, and the elephant's weight broke up the sand it was standing on and turned it to a quag. That much was visible, but little else; for the clamoring priests forbade any English foot to come too near, perhaps for fear that their gains might be lessened. Where the press parted, it was possible to catch a glimpse of this ghoulish kneading by the naked men in the boat, and to hear the words of a chanted prayer. But that was all.

## THE BRIDE'S PROGRESS.

“ And school foundations in the act  
Of holiday, three files compact,  
Shall learn to view thee as a fact.  
Connected with that zealous tract  
‘ Rome, Babylon, and Nineveh.’ ”

—*The Burden of Nineveh.*

It would have been presumption and weariness deliberately to have described Benares. No man, except he who writes a guide-book, “ does ” the Strand or Westminster Abbey. The foreigner—French or American—tells London what to think of herself, as the visitor tells the Anglo-Indian what to think of India. Our neighbor over the way always knows so much more about us than we ourselves. The Bride interpreted Benares as fresh youth and radiant beauty can interpret a city gray and worn with years. Providence had been very good to her, and she repaid Providence by dressing herself to the best advantage—which, if the French speak truth, is all that a fair woman can do toward religion. Generations, of untroubled ease and well-being must have builded the dainty figure and rare face, and the untamable arrogance of wealth looked out of the calm eyes. “ India,” said The Bride, philosophically, “ is an incident only in our

trip. We are going on to Australia and China, and then Home by San Francisco and New York. We shall be at Home again before the season is quite ended." And she patted her bracelets, smiling softly to herself over some thought that had little enough to do with Benares or India—whichever was the "incident." She went into the city of Benares. Benares of the Buddhists and the Hindus—of Durga of the Thousand Names—of two thousand Temples, and twice two thousand stenchcs. Her high heels rang delicately upon the stone pavement of the gullies, and her brow unmarked as that of a little child, was troubled by the stenchcs. "Why does Benares smell so?" demanded the Bride, pathetically. "*Must* we do it, if it smells like this?" The Bridegroom was high-colored, fair-whiskered, and insistent, as an Englishman should be. "Of course we must. It would never do to go home without having seen Benares. Where is a guide?" The streets were alive with them, and the couple chose him who spoke English most fluently. "Would you like to see where the Hindus are burnt" said he. They would, though The Bride shuddered as she spoke, for she feared that it would be very horrible. A ray of gracious sunlight touched her hair as she turned, walking cautiously in the middle of the narrow way, into the maze of the byways of Benares.

The sunlight ceased after a few paces, and



the horrors of the Holy City gathered round her. Neglected rainbow-hued sewage sprawled across the path, and a bull, rotten with some hideous disease that distorted his head out of all bestial likeness, pushed through the filth. The Bride picked her way carefully, giving the bull the wall. A lean dog, dying of mange, growled and yelped among her starveling puppies on a threshold that led into the darkness of some unclean temple. The Bride stooped and patted the beast on the head. "I think she's something like *Bessie*," said The Bride, and once again her thoughts wandered far beyond Benares. The lanes grew narrower and the symbols of a brutal cult more numerous. Hanuman, red, shameless, and smeared with oil, leaped and leered upon the walls above stolid, black, stone bulls, knee-deep in yellow flowers. The bells clamored from unseen temples, and half-naked men with evil eyes rushed out of dark places and besought her for money, saying that they were priests—*padris*, like the *padris* of her own faith. One young man—who knows in what Mission school he had picked up his speech?—told her this in English, and The Bride laughed merrily, shaking her head. "These men speak English," she called back to her husband. "Isn't it funny!"

But the mirth went out of her face when a turn in the lane brought her suddenly above the burning-*ghat*, where a man was piling logs on some Thing that lay wrapped in white

cloth, near the water of the Ganges. "We can't see well from this place," said the Bridegroom, stolidly. "Let us get a little closer." They moved forward through deep gray dust—white sand of the river and black dust of man blended—till they commanded a full view of the steeply sloping bank and the Thing under the logs. A man was laboriously starting a fire at the river end of the pile; stepping wide now and again to avoid the hot embers of a dying blaze actually on the edge of the water. The Bride's face blanched, and she looked appealingly to her husband, but he had only eyes for the newly lit flame. Slowly, very slowly, a white dog crept on his belly down the bank, toward a heap of ashes among which the water was hissing. A plunge, followed by a yelp of pain, told that he had reached food, and that the food was too hot for him. With a deftness that marked long training, he raked the capture from the ashes on to the dust and slobbered, nosing it tentatively. As it cooled, he settled, with noises of animal delight, to his meal and worried and growled and tore. "Will!" said The Bride, faintly. The Bridegroom was watching the newly lit pyre and could not attend. A log slipped sideways, and through the chink showed the face of the man below, smiling the dull thick smile of death, which is such a smile as a very drunken man wears when he has found in his wide-swimming brain a joke of exquisite savor. The dead man grinned

up to the sun and the fair face of The Bride. The flames sputtered and caught and spread. A man waded out knee-deep into the water, which was covered with greasy black embers and an oily scum. He chased the bobbing driftwood with a basket, that it might be saved for another occasion, and threw each take on a mound of such economies or on the back of the unheeding dog deep in the enjoyment of his warm dinner.

Slowly, very slowly, as the flames crackled, the Smiling Dead Man lifted one knee through the light logs. He had just been smitten with the idea of rising from his last couch and confounding the spectators. It was easy to see he was tasting the notion of this novel, this stupendous practical joke, and would presently, always smiling, rise up, and up, and up, and . . .

The fire-shriveled knee gave way, and with its collapse little flames ran forward and whistled and whispered and fluttered from heel to head. "Come away, Will," said The Bride, "come away! It is too horrible. I'm sorry that I saw it." They left together, she with her arm in her husband's for a sign to all the world that, though Death be inevitable and awful, Love is still the greater, and in its sweet selfishness can set at naught even the horrors of a burning-*ghat*.

"I never thought what it meant before," said The Bride, releasing her husband's arm as she recovered herself; "I see now." "See

what?" "Don't you know?" said The Bride, "what Edwin Arnold says:—

'For all the tears of all the eyes  
Have room in Gunga's bed,  
And all the sorrow is gone to-morrow  
When the white flames have fed.'

I see now. I think it is very, *very* horrible." Then to the guide, suddenly, with a deep compassion, "And will you be—will you be burnt in that way, too?" "Yes, your Ladyship," said the guide, cheerfully, "we are all burnt that way." "Poor wretch!" said The Bride to herself. "Now show us some more temples." A second time they dived into Benares City, but it was at least five long minutes before The Bride recovered those buoyant spirits which were hers by right of Youth and Love and Happiness. A very pale and sober little face peered into the filth of the temple of the Cow where the odor of Holiness and Humanity are highest. Fearful and wonderful old women, crippled in hands and feet, body and back, crawled round her; some even touching the hem of her dress. And at this she shuddered, for the hands were very foul. The walls dripped filth, the pavement sweated filth, and the contagion of uncleanness walked among the worshippers. There might have been beauty in the Temple of the Cow; there certainly was horror enough and to spare; but The Bride was conscious only of the filth of the place. She turned to the wisest and best man in the world, asking in-

dignantly, "Why don't these horrid people clean the place out?" "I don't know," said The Bridegroom; "I suppose their religion forbids it." Once more they set out on their journey through the city of monstrous creeds—she in front, the pure white hem of her petticoat raised indignantly clear of the mire, and her eyes full of alarm and watchfulness. Closed galleries crossed the narrow way, and the light of day faded and grew sick ere it could climb down into the abominations of the gullies. A litter of gorgeous red and gold barred the passage to the Golden Temple. "It is the Maharani of Hazaribah," said the guide, "she coming to pray for a child." "Ah!" said The Bride, and turning quickly to her husband, said, "I wish mother were with us." The Bridegroom made no answer. Perhaps he was beginning to repent of dragging a young English girl through the iniquities of Benares. He announced his intention of returning to his hotel, and The Bride dutifully followed. At every turn lewd gods grinned and mouthed at her, the still air was clogged with thick odors and the reek of rotten marigold flowers, and disease stood blind and naked before the sun. "Let us get away quickly," said the Bride; and they escaped to the main street, having honestly accomplished nearly two-thirds of what was written in the little red guide-book. An instinct inherited from a century of cleanly English housewives made The Bride pause before getting into the

carriage, and, addressing the seething crowd generally, murmur, "Oh! you horrid people! Shouldn't I like to wash you."

Yet Benares—which name must certainly be derived from *be*, without, and *nares*, nostrils—is not entirely a Sacred Midden. Very early in the morning, almost before the light had given promise of the day, a boat put out from a *ghât* and rowed up-stream till it stayed in front of the ruined magnificence of Scindia's Ghât—a range of ruined wall and drunken bastion. The Bride and Bridegroom had risen early to catch their last glimpse of the city. There was no one abroad at that hour, and, except from three or four stone-laden boats rolling down from Mirzapur, they were alone upon the river. In the silence a voice thundered far above their heads: "*I bear witness that there is no God but God.*" It was the mullah, proclaiming the Oneness of God in the city of the Million Manifestations. The call rang across the sleeping city and far over the river, and be sure that the mullah abated nothing of the defiance of his cry for that he looked down upon a sea of temples and smelt the incense of a hundred Hindu shrines. The Bride could make neither head nor tail of the business. "What is he making that noise for, Will?" she asked. "Worshiping Vishnu," was the ready reply; for at the outset of his venture into matrimony a young husband is at the least infallible. The Bride snuggled down under her wraps, keep-

ing her delicate, chill-pinked little nose toward the city. Day broke over Benares, and The Bride stood up and applauded with both her hands. It was finer, she said, than any transformation scene; and so in her gratitude she applauded the earth, the sun, and the everlasting sky. The river turned to a silver flood and the ruled lines of the *ghâts* to red gold. "How can I describe this to mother?" she cried, as the wonder grew, and timeless Benares roused to a fresh day. The Bride nestled down in the boat and gazed round-eyed. As water spurts through a leaky dam, as ants pour out from the invaded nest, so the people of Benares poured down the *ghâts* to the river. Wherever The Bride's eye rested, it saw men and women stepping downwards, always downwards, by rotten wall, worn step, tufted bastion, riven-water gate, and stark, bare, dusty bank, to the water. The hundred priests drifted down to their stations under the large mat-umbrellas that all pictures of Benares represent so faithfully. The Bride's face lighted with joy. She had found a simile. "Will! Do you recollect that pantomime we went to ages and ages ago—before we were engaged—at Brighton? Doesn't it remind you of the scene of the Fairy Mushrooms—just before they all got up and danced, you know? Isn't it splendid?" She leaned forward, her chin in her hand, and watched long and intently; and Nature, who is without doubt a Frenchwoman, so keen is her love



for effect, arranged that the shell-like pink of The Bride's cheek should be turned against a dull-red house, in the windows of which sat women in blood-red clothes, letting down crimson turban-cloths for the morning breeze to riot with. From the burning-*ghât* rose lazily a welt of thick blue smoke, and an eddy of the air blew a wreath across the river. The Bride coughed. "Will," she said, "promise me when I die you won't have me cremated—if cremation is the fashion then." And "Will" promised lightly, as a man promises who is looking for long years.

The life of the city went forward. The Bride heard, though she did not understand, the marriage-song, and the chant of prayers, and the wail of the mourners. She looked long and steadfastly at the beating heart of Benares and at the Dead for whom no day had dawned. The place was hers to watch and enjoy if she pleased. Her enjoyment was tempered with some thought of regret; for her eyebrows contracted and she thought. Then the trouble was apparent. "Will!" she said softly, "they don't seem to think much of *us*, do they?" Did she expect, then, that the whole city would make obeisance to young Love, robed and crowned in a gray tweed traveling dress and velvet toque?

The boat drifted down-stream, and an hour or so later the Dufferin Bridge bore away The Bride and Bridegroom on their travels, in which India was to be "only an incident."



“A DISTRICT AT PLAY.”

1887.

FOUR or five years ago, when the Egerton Woolen Mills were young, and Dhariwal, on the Amritsar and Pathankot Line, was just beginning to grow, there was decreed an annual holiday for all the workers in the Mill. In time the little gathering increased from a purely private *tamasha* to a fair, and now all the Gurdaspur District goes a-merrymaking with the Millhands. Here the history begins.

On the evening of Friday, the 20th of August, an Outsider went down to Dhariwal to see that *mela*. He had understood that it was an affair which concerned the People only—that no one in authority had to keep order—that there was no police, and that everybody did what was right in their own eyes; none going wrong. This was refreshing and pastoral, even as Dhariwal, which is on the banks of the Canal, is refreshing and pastoral. The Egerton Mills owns a baby railway—twenty-inch gauge—which joins on to the big line at Dhariwal station, so that the visitor steps from one carriage into another, and journeys in state.

Dusk was closing in as the locomotive—it

wore a cloth round its loins and a string of beads round its neck—ran the tiny carriage into the Mill-yard, and the Outsider heard the low grumble of turbines, and caught a whiff of hot wool from a shed. (The Mills were running and would run till eleven o'clock that night, because, though holidays were necessary, orders were many and urgent.) Both smell and sound suggested the North country at once,—bleak, paved streets of Skipton and Keighley ; chimneys of Beverley and Burnley ; gray stone houses within stone walls, and the moors looking down on all. It was perfectly natural, therefore, to find that the Englishmen who directed the departments of the establishment were from the North also ; and delightful as it was natural to hear again the slow, staid Yorkshire tongue. Here the illusion stopped ; for, in place of the merry rattle of the clogs as the mill-hands left their work, there was only the soft patter of naked feet on bare ground, and for purple, smoke-girt moors, the far-off line of the Dalhousie Hills.

Presently, the electric light began its work, and a tour over the Mills was undertaken. The machinery, the thousands of spindles, and the roaring power-looms were familiar as the faces of old friends ; but the workers were strange indeed. Small brown boys, naked except for a loin-cloth, “ pieced ” the yarn from the spindles under the strong blaze of the electric light, and semi-nude men toiled

at the carding-machine between the whirring belts. It was a shock and a realization—for boys and men seemed to know their work in almost Yorkshire fashion.

But the amusement and not the labor of the Mill was what the Outsider had come to see—the amusement which required no policemen and no appearance of control from without.

Early on Saturday morning all Dhariwal gathered itself on the banks of the Canal—a magnificent stretch of water—to watch the swimming-race, a short half-mile down-stream. Forty-three bronzes had arranged themselves in picturesque attitudes on the girders of the Railway bridge, and the crowd chaffed them according to their deserts. The race was won, from start to finish, by a tailor with a wonderful side-stroke and a cataract in one eye. The advantage counterbalanced the defect, for he steered his mid-stream course as straight as a fish, was never headed, and won, sorely pumped, in seven minutes and a few seconds. The crowd ran along the bank and yelled instructions to its favorites at the top of its voice. Up to this time not more than five hundred folk had put in an appearance, so it was impossible to judge of their behavior in bulk.

After the swimming came the greased pole, an entertainment the pains whereof are reserved for light-limbed boys, and the prizes, in the shape of gay cloths and rupees, are appropriated by heavy fathers. The crowd

had disposed itself in and about the shadow of the trees, where one might circulate comfortably and see the local notabilities.

They are decidedly Republicans in Dhariwal, being innocent of *Darbaries*, C. I. E.'s, fat old gentlemen in flowered brocade, dressing-gowns, and cattle of that kind. Every one seemed much on a level, with the exception of some famous wrestlers, who stood aside with an air of conscious worth, and grinned cavernously when spoken to. They were the *élite* of the assembly, and were to prove their claims to greatness on the morrow. Until the Outsider realized how great an interest the Gurdaspur District took in wrestling, he was rather at a loss to understand why men walked round and round each other warily, like dogs on the eve of a quarrel.

The greasy pole competition finished, there was a general move in the direction of the main road, and couples were chosen from among the Mill-hands for a three-legged race. Here the Outsider joyfully anticipated difficulty in keeping the course clear without a line of policemen; for all crowds, unless duly marshalled, *will* edge forward to see what is going on.

But the democracy of Dhariwal got into their places as they were told, and kept them, with such slight assistance as three or four self-constituted office-bearers gave. Only once, when the honor of two villages *and* the Mill was at stake in the Tug-of-War, were

they unable to hold in, and the Englishmen had to push them back. But this was exceptional, and only evoked laughter, for in the front rank of all—yellow-trouserred and blue-coated—was a real live policeman, who was shouldered about as impartially as the rest. More impartially, in fact ; for to keep a policeman in order is a seldom-given joy, and should be made much of.

Then back to the Mill bungalow for breakfast, where there was a gathering of five or six Englishmen,—Canal Officers and Engineers. Here follows a digression.

After long residence in places where folk discuss such intangible things as Lines, Policies, Schemes, Measures, and the like, in an abstract and bloodless sort of way, it was a revelation to listen to men who talk of Things and the People—crops and plows and water-supplies, and the best means of using all three for the benefit of a district. They spoke masterfully, these Englishmen, as owners of a country might speak, and it was not at first that one realized how every one of the concerns they touched upon with the air of proprietorship were matters which had not the faintest bearing on their pay or prospects, but concerned the better tillage or husbandry of the fields around. It was good to sit idly in the garden, by the guava-trees, and to hear these stories of work undertaken and carried out in the interests of, and, best of all, recognized by, Nubbi Buksh—the man

whose mind moves so slowly and whose life is so bounded. They had no particular love for the land, and most assuredly no hope of gain from it. Yet they spoke as though their hopes of salvation were centered on driving into a Zemindar's head the expediency of cutting his wheat a little earlier than his wont ; or on proving to some authority or other that the Canal-rate in such and such a district was too high. Every one knows that India is a country filled with Englishmen, who live down in the plains and do things other than writing futile reports, but it is wholesome to meet them in the flesh.

To return, however, to the "Tug-of-War" and the sad story of the ten men of Futteh Nangal. Now Futteh Nangal is a village of proud people, mostly sepoys, full in the stomach ; and Kung is another village filled with Mill-hands of long standing, who have grown lusty on good pay. When the tug began, quoth the proud men of Futteh Nangal : "Let all the other teams compete. We will stand aside and pull the winners." This *hauteur* was not allowed, and in the end it happened that the men of Kung thoroughly defeated the sepoys of Futteh Nangal amid a scene of the wildest excitement, and secured for themselves the prize,—an American plow,—leaving the men of Futteh Nangal only a new and improved rice-husker.

Other sports followed, and the crowd grew denser and denser throughout the day, till

evening, when every one assembled once more by the banks of the Canal to see the fireworks, which were impressive. Great boxes of rockets and shells, and wheels and Roman-candles, had come up from Calcutta, and the intelligent despatchers had packed the whole in straw, which absorbs damp. This didn't spoil the shells and rockets—quite the contrary. It added a pleasing uncertainty to their flight and converted the shells into very fair imitations of the real article. The crowd dodged and ducked, and yelled and laughed and chaffed, at each illumination, and did their best to fall into the Canal. It was a jovial scuffle, and ended, when the last shell had burst gloriously on the water, in a general adjournment to the main street of Dhariwal village, where there was provided a magic-lantern.

At first sight it does not seem likely that a purely rustic audience would take any deep interest in magic-lanterns; but they did, and showed a most unexpected desire to know what the pictures meant. It was an out-of-door performance, the sheet being stretched on the side of a house and the people sitting below in silence. Then the native doctor—who was popular with the Mill-hands—went up on to the roof and began a running commentary on the pictures as they appeared; and his imagination was as fluent as his Punjabi. The crowd grew irreverent and jested with him, until they recognized a portrait of one of the



native overseers and a *khitmutgar*. Then they turned upon the two who had achieved fame thus strangely, and commented on their beauty. Lastly, there flashed upon the sheet a portrait of Her Majesty the Empress. The native doctor rose to the occasion, and, after enumerating a few of our Great Lady's virtues, called upon the crowd to *salaam* and cheer; both of which they did noisily, and even more noisily, when they were introduced to the Prince of Wales. One might moralize to any extent on the effect produced by this little demonstration in an out-of-the-way corner of Her Majesty's Empire.

Next morning, being Sunday and cool, was given up to wrestling. By this time the whole of the Gurdaspur District was represented, and the crowd was some five thousand strong. Eventually, after much shouting, one hundred and seventy men from all the villages, near and far, were set down to wrestle, if time allowed. And in truth the first prize—a plow for the man who showed most “form”—was worth wrestling for. Armed with a note-book and a pencil, the Manager, by virtue of considerable experience in the craft, picked out the men who were to contend together; and these, fearing defeat, did in almost every instance explain how their antagonist was too much for them. The people sat down in companies upon the grass, village by village, flanking a huge square marked on the ground. Other restraint there was none. Within the square, was



the roped ring for the wrestlers, and close to the ring a tent for the dozen or so of Englishmen present. Be it noted that anybody might come into this tent who did not interfere with a view of the wrestling. There were no lean brown men, clasping their noses with their hands and following in the wake of the Manager Sahib. Still less were there the fat men in gorgeous raiment before noted—the men who shake hands “Europe fashion” and demand the favor of your interest for their uncle’s son’s wife’s cousin.

It was a sternly democratic community, bent on enjoying itself, and, unlike all other democracies, knowing how to secure what it wanted.

The wrestlers were called out by name, stripped, and set to amid applausive shouts from their respective villages and trainers. There were many men of mark engaged,—huge men who stripped magnificently; light, lean men, who wriggled like eels, and got the mastery by force of cunning; men deep in the breast as bulls, lean in the flank as greyhounds, and lithe as otters; men who wrestled with amicable grins; men who lost their tempers and smote each other with the clenched hand on the face, and so were turned out of the ring amid a storm of derision from all four points of the compass; men as handsome as statues of the Greek gods, and foul-visaged men whose noses were very properly rubbed in the dirt.

As he watched, the Outsider was filled with a great contempt and pity for all artists at Home, because he felt sure that they had never seen the human form aright. One wrestler caught another by the waist, and lifting him breast-high, attempted to throw him bodily, the other stiffening himself like a bar as he was heaved up. The *coup* failed, and for half a minute the two stayed motionless as stone, till the lighter weight wrenched himself out of the other's arms, and the two came down,—flashing through a dozen perfect poses as they fell,—till they subsided once more into ignoble scuffle in the dust. The story of that day's strife would be a long one were it written at length,—how one man did brutally twist the knee of another (which is allowed by wrestling law, though generally considered mean) for a good ten minutes, and how the twistee groaned, but held out, and eventually threw the twister, and stalked round the square to receive the congratulations of his friends; how the winner in each bout danced joyfully over to the tent to have his name recorded (there were between three and four hundred rupees given in prizes in the wrestling matches alone;) how the Millhands applauded their men; and how Sid-dum, Risada, Kalair, Narote, Sohul, Maha, and Doolanager, villages of repute, yelled in reply; how the Sujhanpur men took many prizes for the honor of the Sugar mills there; how the event of the day was a tussle be-

tween a boy—a mere child—and a young man ; how the youngster nearly defeated his opponent amid riotous yells, but broke down finally through sheer exhaustion ; how his trainer ran forward to give him a pill of dark and mysterious composition, but was ordered away under the rules of the game. Lastly, how a haughty and most wonderfully ugly weaver of the Mill was thrown by an outsider, and how the Manager chuckled, saying that a defeat at wrestling would keep the weaver quiet and humble for some time, which was desirable. All these things would demand much space to describe and must go unrecorded.

They wrestled—couple by couple—for six good hours by the clock, and a Kashmiri weaver (why are Kashmiris so objectionable all the Province over ?) later on in the afternoon, was moved to make himself a nuisance to his neighbors. Then the four self-appointed office-bearers moved in his direction ; but the crowd had already dealt with him, and the Dormouse in *Alice in Wonderland* was never so suppressed as that weaver. Which proves that a democracy can keep order among themselves when they like.

The Outsider departed, leaving the wrestlers still at work, and the last he heard as he dived through that most affable, grinning assembly, was the shout of one of the Mill-hands, who had thrown his man and ran to the tent to get his name entered. Freely translated the

words were exactly what Gareth, the Scullion-Knight, said to King Arthur :—

“Yea mighty through thy meat and drinks am I,  
And I can topple down a hundred such.”

Then back to the Schemes and Lines and Policies and Projects filled with admiration for the Englishmen who live in patriarchal fashion among the People, respecting and respected, knowing their ways and their wants ; believing (soundest of all beliefs) that “too much progress is bad,” and compassing with their heads and hands real, concrete, and undeniable Things. As distinguished from the speech which dies and the paper-work which perishes.

## WHAT IT COMES TO.

“Men instinctively act under the excitement of the battle-field, only as they have been taught to act in peace.” . . . These words deserve to be engraved in letters of gold over the gates of every barrack and drill-ground in the country. The drill of the soldier now begins and ends in the company . . . Each Company will stand for itself on parade, practically as independent as a battery of artillery in a brigade, etc., etc. *Vide Comments on New German Drill Regulation, in Pioneer.*

SCENE. *Canteen of the Tyneside Tailtwisters in full blast. Chumer of B Company annexes the Pioneer on its arrival, by right of the strong arm, and turns it over contemptuously.*

CHUMER.—’Ain’t much in this ’ere. On’y Jack the Ripper and a lot about Ci-vilians. ’Might think the ’ole country was full of Ci-vilians. Ci-vilians an’ drill. ’Strewth a’ mighty! As if a man didn’t get ’nuff drill outside o’ his evenin’ paiper. Anybody got the fill of a pipe ’ere?

SHUCKBRUGH (*of B Company passing pouch*). —Let’s ’ave ’old o’ that paper. Wot’s on? Wot’s in? No more *new* drill?

CHUMER.—Drill be sugared! When I was at ’ome, now buyin’ my *Times* orf the Railway stall like a gentleman, *I* never read nothin’ about drill. There *wasn’t* no drill. Strike me blind, these Injian papers ain’t got nothin’

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else to write about. When 'tisin't our drill, it's Rooshian or Prooshian or French. It's Prooshian now. Brrh!

HOOKEY (*E Company*).—All for to improve your mind, Chew! You'll get a first-class school-ticket one o' these days, if you go on.

CHUMER (*whose strong point is not education*).—You'll get a first-class head on top o' your shoulders, 'Ook, if you go on. You mind that I ain't no bloomin' litteratoor but . . .

SHUCKBRUGH.—Go on about the Prooshians an' let 'Ook alone. 'Ook 'as a—wot's its name?—fas—fas—fascilitude for impartin' instruction. 'E's down in the Captain's book as sich. Ain't you, 'Ook?

CHUMER (*anxious to vindicate his education*).—Listen 'ere! “Men instinck—stinkivly act under the excitement *of* the battle-field on'y as they 'ave been taught for to act in peace.” An' the man that wrote that sez 't ought to be printed in gold in our barracks.

SHUCKBRUGH (*who has been through the Afghan War*).—'Might a told 'im that, if he'd come to *me*, any time these ten years.

HOOKEY (*loftily*).—O I bid fair he's a bloomin' General. Wot's 'e drivin' at?

SHUCKBRUGH.—'E says wot you do on p'rade you do without thinkin' under fire. If you was taught to stand on your 'ed on p'rade, you'd do *so* in action.

CHUMER.—I'd lie on my belly first for a bit, if so be there was aught to lie be'ind.

HOOKEY.—That's 'ow you've been taught.

We're allus lyin' on our bellies be'ind every bloomin' bush—spoilin' our best clobber. Takin' advantage o' cover, they call it.

SHUCKBRUGH.—An' the more you lie the more you want to lie. That's human natur'.

CHUMER.—It's rare good—for the henemy. I'm lyin' 'ere where this pipe is ; Shukky's there by the 'baccy-paper ; 'Ook is there be'ind the pewter, an' the rest of us all over the place crawlin' on our bellies an' poppin' at the smoke in front. Old Pompey, arf a mile be'ind, sez, "The battalion will now attack." Little Mildred squeaks out, "Charrge !" Shukky an' me, an' you, an' 'im, picks ourselves out o' the dirt, an' charges. But 'ow the *dooce* can you charge from skirmishin' order? That's wot I want to know. There ain't no touch—there ain't no *chello* ; an' the minut' the charge is over, You've got to play at bein' a bloomin' field-rat all over again.

GENERAL CHORUS.—Bray-vo, Chew ! Go it, Sir Garnet ! Two pints and a hopper for Chew ! *Kernel Chew !*

HOOKEY (*who has possessed himself of the paper*).—Well, the Prooshians ain't goin' to have any more o' that. There ain't goin' to be no more battalion-drill—so this bloke says. On'y just the comp'ny handed over to the comp'ny orf'cer to do wot 'e likes with.

SHUCKBRUGH.—Gawd 'elp E Comp'ny if they do that to *us* !

CHUMER (*hotly*).—You're bloomin' pious



all of a sudden. Wot's wrong with Little Mildred, I'd like to know?

SHUCKBRUGH.—Little Mildred's all right. It's his bloomin' dandified Skipper—it's Collar an' Cuffs—it's Ho de Kolone—it's Squeaky Jim that I'm set against.

CHUMER.—Well. Ho de Kolone is goin' 'Ome, an' maybe we'll have Sugartongs instead. Sugartongs is a hard drill, but 'e's got no bloomin' frills about 'im.

HOOKEY (*of E Company*).—You ought to 'ave Hackerstone—e'd wheel yer into line. Our Jemima ain't much to look at, but 'e knows wot 'e wants to do an' he does it. *E* don't club the company an' damn the Sargints, Jemima doesn't. 'E's a proper man an' no error.

SHUCKBRUGH.—Thank you for nothin'. Sugartongs is a vast better. Mess Sargint 'e told us that Sugartongs is goin' to be married at 'Ome. If 'e's *that*, o' course 'e won't be no good; but the Mess Sargint's a bloomin' liar mostly.

CHUMER.—Sugartongs won't marry—not 'e. 'E's too fond o' the regiment. Little Mildred's like to do that first; bein' so young.

HOOKEY (*returning to paper*).—"On'y the comp'ny an' the comp'ny orf'cer doin' what 'e thinks 'is men can do." 'Strewth! Our Jemima'd make us dance down the middle an' back again. But what would they do with our Colonel? I don't catch the run o' this new trick of company officers thinkin' for themselves.



SHUCKBRUGH.—Give 'im a stickin' plaster to keep 'im on 'is 'orse at battalion p'rade, an' lock 'im up in ord'ly-room 'tween whiles. Me an' one or two more would see 'im now an' again. Ho! Ho!

CHUMER. A Colonel's a bloomin' Colonel anyway. 'Can't do without a Colonel.

SHUCKBRUGH.—'Oo said we would, you fool? Colonel'll give his order, "Go an' do this an' go an' do that, an' do it quick." Sugartongs 'e salutes an' Jemima 'e salutes an' orf we goes; Little Mildred trippin' over 'is sword every other step. *We* know Sugartongs; *you* know Jemima; an' *they* know *us*. "Come on," sez they. "Come on it is," sez we; an' we don' crawl on our bellies no more, but *comes* on. Old Pompey has given 'is orders an' we does 'em. Old Pompey can't cut in to with: "Wot the this an' that are you doin' there? Retire your men. Go to Blazes and cart cinders," an' such like. There's a deal in that there notion of independent commands.

CHUMER.—There is. It's 'ow it comes in action anywoys, if it isn't wot it comes on p'rade. But look 'ere, wot 'appens if you don't know your bloomin' orf'cer, an' 'e don't know nor care a brass farden about you—like Squeakin' Jim?

HOOKEY.—Things 'appens, as a rule; an' then again they don't some'ow. There's a deal o' luck knockin' about the world, an' takin' one thing with another a fair shares o'

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that comes to the Army. 'Cordin' to this 'ere (*he thumps the paper*) we ain't got no weppings worth the name, an' we don't know 'ow to use 'em when we 'ave—I didn't mean your belt, Chew—we ain't got no orf'cers; we 'ave got bloomin' swipes for liquor.

CHUMER (*sotto voce*).—Yuss. Undred an' ten gallons beer made out of a heighty-four-gallon cask an' the strength kep' up with 'baccy. Yah! Go on, 'Ook.

HOOKEY.—We ain't got no drill, we ain't got no men, we ain't got no kit, nor yet no bullocks to carry it if we 'ad—where in the name o' fortune do all our bloomin' victories come from? It's a tail-upwards way o' workin'; but where *do* the victories come from?

SHUCKBRUGH (*recovering his pipe from Hockey's mouth*).—Ask Little Mildred—'e carries the Colors. Chew, are you goin' to the bazaar?

## THE OPINIONS OF GUNNER BARNABAS.

A NARROW-MINDED Legislature sets its face against that Atkins, whose Christian name is Thomas, drinking with the "civilian." To this prejudice I and Gunner Barnabas rise superior. Ever since the night when he, weeping, asked me whether the road was as frisky as his mule, and then fell head-first from the latter on the former, we have entertained a respect for each other. I wondered that he had not been instantly killed, and he that I had not reported him to various high Military Authorities then in sight, instead of gently rolling him down the hillside till the danger was overpast. On that occasion, it cannot be denied that Gunner Barnabas was drunk. Later on, as our intimacy grew, he explained briefly that he had been "overtaken" for the first time in three years ; and I had no reason to doubt the truth of his words.

Gunner Barnabas was a lean, heavy-browed, hollow-eyed giant, with a mustache of the same hue and texture as his mule's tail. Much had he seen from Karachi to Bharno, and, so his bosom friend, McGair, assured me, had once killed a man "with 'e's naked fistes." But it was hard to make him talk. When he was moved to speech, he roved impartially

from one dialect to another, being a Devonshire man, brought up in the slums of Fratton, nearly absorbed into Portsmouth Dockyard, sent to Ireland as a blacksmith's assistant, educated imperfectly in London, and there enlisted into what he profanely called a "Jim-jam batt'ry." "They want big 'uns for the work we does," quoth Gunner Barnabas, bringing down a huge hairy hand on his mule's withers. "Big 'uns an' steady 'uns." He flung the bridle over the mule's head, hitched the beast to a tree, and settled himself on a boulder ere lighting an unspeakably rank bazaar-cheroot.

The current of conversation flowed for a while over the pebbles of triviality. Then, in answer to a remark of mine, Gunner Barnabas heaved his huge shoulders clear of the rock and rolled out his mind between puffs. We had touched tenderly and reverently on the great question of temperance in the Army. Gunner Barnabas pointed across the valley to the Commander-in-Chief's house and spoke: "'Im as lives over yonder is goin' the right way to work," said he. "You can make a man march by reg'lation, make a man fire by reg'lation, make a man load up a bloomin' mule by reg'lation. You can't make him a Blue Light by reg'lation, and that's the only thing as 'ill make the Blue Lights stop grousin' and stiffin'." It should be explained for the benefit of the uninitiated, that a "Blue Light" is a Good Templar, that "grousing" is sulking,

and "stiffin" is using unparliamentary language. "An' Blue Lights, specially when the orf'cer commanding is a Blue Light too, is a won'erful fool. You never be a Blue Light, Sir, not so long as you live." I promised faithfully that the Blue Lights should burn without me to all Eternity, and demanded of Gunner Barnabas the reasons for his dislike.

My friend formulated his indictment slowly and judicially. "Sometimes a Blue Light's a blue shirker; very often 'e's a noosance; and more than often 'e's a lawyer, with more chin than 'e or 'is friends wants to 'ear. When a man—any man—sez to me 'you're damned, and there ain't no trustin' you,'—meanin' not as you or I sittin' 'ere might say 'you be damned' comfortable an' by way o' makin' talk like, but reg'lar damned—why, naturally, I ain't pleased. Now when a Blue Light ain't *sayin'* that 'e's throwin' out a forty-seven inch chest hinside of 'isself as it was, an' letting you see 'e thinks it. I hate a Blue Light. But there's some is good, better than ord'nary, and them I has nothing to say against. What I sez is, too much bloomin' 'oliness ain't proper, nor fit for man or beast." He threw himself back on the ground and drove his boot-heels into the mould. Evidently, Gunner Barnabas had suffered from the "Blue Lights" at some portion of his career. I suggested mildly that the Order to which he objected was doing good work, and quoted statistics to prove this, but the great Gunner remained

unconvinced. "Look 'ere," said he, "if you knows anything o' the likes o' us, you knows that the Blue Lights sez when a man drinks he drinks for the purpose of meanin' to be bloomin' drunk, and there ain't no safety 'cept in not drinking at all. Now that ain't all true. There's men as can drink their whack and be no worse for it. Them's grown men, for the boys drink for honor and glory—Lord 'elp 'em—an *they* should be dealt with diff'rent.

"But the Blue Light 'e sez to us: 'You drink mod'rate? You ain't got it in you, an' you don't come into our nice rooms no more. You go to the Canteen an' hog your liquor there.' Now I put to you, Sir, *as* a friend, are that the sort of manners to projuce good feelin' in a rig'ment or anywhere else? And when 'Im that lives over yonder"—out went the black-bristled hand once more towards Snowdon—"sez in a—in a—pamphlick which it is likely you 'ave seen"—Barnabas was talking down to my civilian intellect—"sez 'come on and be mod'rate them as can, an' I'll see that your Orf'cer Commandin' 'elps' you;' up gets the Blue Lights and sez: "'Strewth! the Commander-in-Chief is aidin' an' abettin' the Devil an' all 'is Angels. You *can't* be mod'rate,' sez the Blue Lights, an' that's what makes 'em feel 'oly. Garrn! It's settin' 'emselves up for bein' better men than them as commands 'em, an' puttin' difficulties all roun' an' about. That's a bloomin' Blue Light all over, that is. What I sez is

give the mod'rate lay a chance. I s'pose there's room even for Blue Lights an' men without aprins in this 'ere big Army. Let the Blue Lights take off their aprins an' 'elp the mod'rate men if they ain't too proud. I ain't above goin' out on pass with a Blue Light if 'e sez I'm a man, an' not an —untrustable Devil always a-hankerin' after lush. But *contrariwise*”—Gunner Barnabas stopped.

“Contrariwise how?” said I.

“If I was 'Im as lives over yonder, an' you was me, an' you wouldn't take the mod'rate lay, an' was a-comin' on the books and otherwise a-misconductin' of yourself, I would say: ‘Gunner Barnabas,’ I would say, an' by that I would be understood to be addressin' everybody with a uniform, ‘you are a incorrigable in-tox-i-cator’”—Barnabas sat up, folded his arms, and assumed an air of ultra-judicial ferocity—“‘reported to me as such by your Orf'cer Commandin.’ Very good, Gunner Barnabas,’ I would say. ‘I cannot, knowin’ what I do o’ the likes of you, subjergate your indecent cravin’ for lush; but I will edgercate you to hold your liquor without offense to them as is your friends an’ companions, an’ without danger to the Army if so be you’re on sentry-go. I will make your life, Gunner Barnabas, such that you will pray on your two bended knees for to be shut of it. You shall be flogged between the guns if you disgrace a Batt’ry, or in hollow square o’ the rig’ment if you belong to the Fut, or from stables to bar-

ricks and back again if you are Cav'lry. I'll clink you till you forget what the sun looks like, an' I'll pack-drill you till your kit grows into your shoulder-blades like toadstools on a stump. I'll learn you to be sober when the Widow requires of your services, an' if I don't learn you I'll *kill* you. Understan' that, Gunner Barnabas; for tenderness is wasted on the likes o' you. You shall learn for to control yourself for fear o' your dirty life; an' so long as that fear is over you, Gunner Barnabas, you'll be a man worth the shootin'."

Gunner Barnabas stopped abruptly and broke into a laugh. "I'm as bad as the Blue Lights, only 'tother way on. But 'tis a fact that in spite o' any amount o' mod'ration and pamphlicks we've got a scatterin' o' young imps an' old devils wot you can't touch excep' through the hide o' them, and by cuttin' deep at that. Some o' the young ones wants but one leatherin' to keep the fear o' drink before their eyes for years an' years; some o' the old ones wants leatherin' now and again, for the want of drink is in their marrer. You talk, an' you talk, an' you talk o' what a fine fellow the Privit Sodger is—an so 'e is many of him; but there's *one* med'cin' or *one* sickness that you've guv up too soon. Preach an' Blue Light an' medal and teach us, but, for some of us, keep the whipcord handy."

Barnabas had rather startled me by the vehemence of his words. He must have seen this, for he said with a twinkle in his eye:



"I should have made a first-class Blue Light—rammin' double-charges home in this way. Well, I know I'm speakin' truth, and the Blue Light thinks he is, I s'pose; an' it's too big a business for you an' me to settle in one afternoon."

The sound of horses' feet came from the path above our heads. Barnabas sprang up.

"Orf'er an' 'rf'cer's lady," said he, relapsing into his usual speech. 'Won't do for you to be seen a-talkin' with the likes o' me. Hutup *kurcha* !"

And with a stumble, a crash, and a jingle of harness, Gunner Barnabas went his way.





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